

# THE SCORE

A MUSIC MAGAZINE

Editor: William Glock

Number 14, December 1955

KRAUS REPRINT

Nendeln / Liechtenstein

1969

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# THE SCORE

## and I.M.A. magazine

*Presque lent, tendre*

The image displays a handwritten musical score for a piece titled "THE SCORE" and "I.M.A. magazine". The tempo and mood are indicated as "Presque lent, tendre". The score is written for a flute and piano. It consists of four systems of music. Each system has a flute staff and a piano staff. The flute part is written in treble clef, and the piano part is written in treble and bass clefs. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The tempo is "Presque lent" and the mood is "tendre". The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings like *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *p* (piano). The first system shows the flute playing a melodic line with a slur, and the piano providing harmonic support. The second system continues the melodic development. The third system shows a more complex melodic line for the flute. The fourth system concludes the piece with a final melodic phrase for the flute and a sustained harmonic base for the piano.

COVER MANUSCRIPT is a page of *Le Merle Noir*, by Olivier Messiaen. It is reproduced by permission of Alphonse Leduc et Cie.

According to present plans, the March issue will be devoted largely to Italian music, and will contain articles by G. F. Malipiero, on 20th century Italian composers; Roman Vlad, on the later works of Dallapiccola; Massimo Mila, on Gino Negri; and F. Sifonia, on the Italian Third programme. It is also hoped to include hitherto unpublished works by Gesualdo and Busoni, and a piece written especially for the occasion. Furthermore, this issue will contain Act II of the libretto of *The Magic Flute*, in a new version by W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman.

The magazine appears four times a year. It can be obtained for an annual subscription of one guinea (including postage), or \$3, or the equivalent in other currencies, from the Publishers, to whom cheques or postal orders should be made payable. From this issue onwards, single copies will cost 6/-.

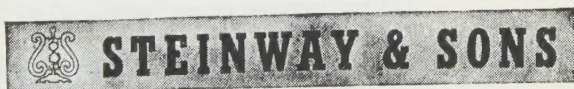
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# THE SCORE

## AND I.M.A. MAGAZINE

Editor: William Glock

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## CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

HERMANN ABERT: *b.* Stuttgart, 1871; *d.* there, 1927. Famous German musicologist, whose book on Mozart, published in 1921, needs revision in many details but is still one of the two or three outstanding works on this composer. The translation of the chapter on Mozart's personality is printed by permission of Breitkopf and Härtel, Wiesbaden, and is copyright by them.

ALEKSANDR HELMANN: Born at Vilna, 1912, died in London, 1954. His father was a concert pianist, his mother a distinguished singer. After giving many remarkable recitals as a child prodigy, in 1923 Helmann emigrated with his family to the United States. There he studied piano with Rosenthal, and composition first with Boris Levenson (a pupil of Rimsky Korsakov and Glazunov), and then with Joseph Schillinger. He acquired a profound knowledge of Gregorian chant, and of the music of the 14th and 15th centuries. It was through the latter, particularly the music of Dufay and Ockeghem, that his attention turned to the 12-note technique. Helmann became recognized as one of the greatest pianists of the day, but in 1951 he was struck down with angina pectoris and coronary thrombosis, never again gave concerts, and devoted such strength as he had to composition. He prefaced the *Sonnet* published in this issue (*see page 27*) with Shakespeare's

'That time of year thou mayst in me behold . . .'

ERNEST GOLD: Born 1921 in Vienna. Went in 1938 to the United States, where he studied composition with George Antheil and conducting with Leon Barzin. His works include two symphonies, a piano concerto, several shorter orchestral works and much chamber music. He has also composed music for more than twenty films.

DAVID DREW: Born 1930 in London. Educated at Harrow and Peterhouse, Cambridge. The first two parts of his study on Messiaen have earned him the highest regard as a critic; and the third part is as good as the others, or better. With Roman Vlad he directed a film music group this year at the Summer School at Dartington. An article of his dealing with the French musical scene since Debussy will be published next year by Routledge and Kegan Paul, as part of a symposium on modern music edited by Howard Hartog.

We wish to express an apology to Durand et Cie and to Alphonse Leduc et Cie for not printing acknowledgments beneath the examples from Messiaen's works used in the September issue, and published by them. And G. Schirmer Inc., New York, have written to say that Busoni's concert transcription of the overture to *Don Giovanni* is their copyright, and not that of Breitkopf and Härtel as stated in Ronald Stevenson's article on *Busoni and Mozart*.

There is an error on page 51 of this issue. The last note of the lower part in Ex. 4B should be E flat, not E natural.

# THE PERSONALITY OF MOZART

*Hermann Abert*

With an introduction by Anna Amalie Abert

When Hermann Abert decided, thirty years ago, to publish separately this chapter from his biography of Mozart, he wrote as follows: 'I believe the choice of this chapter for separate publication is justified both by the subject and by its treatment. In contrast to previous authors of musicians' biographies, I have tried to examine the artist from a psychological and not merely from the antiquarian or historical point of view, and to grasp not only the artist's development but also his character as a whole, showing the unity of the forces active in his life and creative work. May this special issue therefore make a modest contribution to that understanding of the "new Mozart" which we are at last trying to reach.'

The struggle for the 'new Mozart' is still in progress, and countless fresh details have emerged which show many things in a different light from thirty years ago. Mozart's position amongst his contemporaries has been discussed from various standpoints. Friedrich Blume, for example, (*W. A. Mozart*, Wolfenbüttel-Berlin 1942) sees the master in every respect as a man of the new age of world-citizenship. Robert Haas (*W. A. Mozart*, 2nd edition, Potsdam 1950) emphasizes Mozart's receptiveness to the liberal and humanitarian striving of the age of Joseph II and his contribution to it. Bernhard Paumgartner (*Mozart*, Berlin and Zürich 1940) underlines the Austrian character of all the manifestations of Mozart's spirit, whilst Ernst Fritz Schmid in *Ein schwäbisches Mozart-Buch* (Lorsch-Stuttgart 1948) accentuates the importance of Mozart's Swabian heritage. Two other important publications that must be mentioned are *Das neue Mozart-Jahrbuch* (1941-43, editor, E. Valentin) and the Mozarteum's *Mozart Jahrbuch* (since 1950).

Despite the activity of three decades, however, Hermann Abert's portrait of Mozart has not lost any of its validity, which is strong evidence for the success of the author's attempt to present Mozart's character as a whole and to grasp the unity of the forces in his life and art. To Abert, Mozart, like the characters in his operas, is a 'unique interplay of the different, ever changing forces of the soul' and his work is the direct product of this interplay. Abert certainly places Mozart in his environment—in considering the music he gives a thorough account of the musical conditions of the time—yet what he primarily seizes upon in the personality of Mozart are the independent and unique qualities and not the results of outward circumstances.

Hermann Abert used to say himself that the biographies of great men ought to be re-written at least once every fifty years. This is certainly true of Mozart, whose work has always given occasion for fresh research and continues to do so. But an entirely new picture of Mozart, a new impression of his life and work, of the man and the artist, has not yet emerged. Hermann Abert's picture still remains true for us; it is as fresh as when he wrote it and has acquired in addition some of the timeless quality of a classic.

Anna Amalie Abert.

*He who would the poet know, to the poet's land must go.* This saying of Goethe's is as true of Mozart as of any other creative genius. Only his own words and music can help to reveal his inner nature. We have a good many reports and observations on his personality, and many of them can be of value to the biographer, who can learn from them the impression this exceptional being made on ordinary people around him. But these are not primary sources. They usually reveal far more of

the author's personality than of Mozart's. A great deal of caution is also necessary with regard to the 'authentic' remarks attributed to Mozart, for we know from more recent examples of what wild imagination enthusiastic disciples are capable.

Nor are the primary sources of letters and works themselves of equal value. The former, especially with their often impressionistic character, are certainly first-class evidence and there are few, even among the most hasty notes, that do not contain a part of Mozart's individuality. But letters are of course more or less influenced by the context and by the personality of the receiver; Mozart seldom confided his inner soul in a letter. So they too need to be critically studied and supplemented by the music. Only the latter reveals Mozart's true nature, his inner and autonomous being, unclouded by chance and outside influence. Not that the Mozart of the contemporary reports differs in any essential way from the Mozart who wrote the music; on the contrary, outward life and artistic creation are determined by the same forces. But one must not apply the criteria of ordinary mortals to such an exceptional man. The main source of his existence was his artistic vision and creation; it also filled the whole of his outward life, to such an extent as to make it incomprehensible to the world around him. His sister already felt this and chose the idea of a child when trying to explain him in general terms; many contemporaries agreed with her. (Herder uses the same concept when criticizing Goethe, and Schopenhauer employs it in his definition of genius.) This judgment implied the conclusion, whether critical or admiring, that Mozart's world differed fundamentally from that of ordinary people. Though they realized that he differed from them, Mozart's contemporaries, with the possible exception of Haydn, were unaware that his was a higher and purer world than theirs, however much many of them were entranced by his art. Their world was the customary world of the citizen, ruled by state, religion, morality, social convention and so on; if nature had blessed one of them with an artistic talent, he merely regarded it as a special gift enabling him to picture in music the experience of this social existence. Such was the case with Leopold Mozart, but it was different with his son. Wolfgang's urge for artistic creation was at the centre of existence, needing no outside stimulus but also tolerating no deliberate interruption. The soul and fate of Mozart lay in his artistic creation. We know that other great musicians such as Handel, Haydn and Beethoven regarded themselves as tools of a higher power, conscious that their creative ability lay above and beyond themselves. Though we have no record that Mozart held this view it is not unlikely that he too had this sense of what Goethe called the daemonic. When Leopold Mozart composed he could summon and dismiss the Muse as he pleased, but Wolfgang's genius was not to be commanded from outside. On the contrary, it formed his outward life according to its own laws. Mozart's life is not to be separated from his art, for both are ordained by the same power.

And yet it was in his attitude to the external forms of life that his contemporaries realized the great difference between Mozart's experience of life and theirs. The first thing that the ordinary citizen tends to criticize in a genius is his unpractical



nature. Mozart was impractical, but not in the sense that he sacrificed all action to a life of thought and feeling. In fact he could act with energy and clearheadedness when he was following his basic impulse against ties and controls—as in his fight with the Archbishop of Salzburg and then with his own father. On the other hand he was quite impractical in the sense of that clever exploitation of outward circumstances, of that fitting into a chain of coincidences, which most people confuse with the mastery of life. This was quite foreign to Mozart, for his reality hardly knew such coincidences. Hence that indolence, indeed indifference to all the conditions of practical life which in the end contributed so much to his outward ruin; even in his last years, when he suffered deeply as a result, his life seemed more like a bad dream from which his creative activity, then stronger than ever, could set him free. It is significant that in those years when he came nearest to writing for society, as for example in 1783-86, his interest in the outside world grows too; whereas immediately afterwards during the period of the greatest works it wanes again, with dire consequences for his outward life. Even events which generally cut deeply into the life of a man lose their keenness in his creative urge: the death of his mother in Paris, for example, or that of his father, which had lost its terror for him in advance, as we see from his philosophical letter to Leopold.

Now, what was the reality like, that this genius carried hidden in his heart? Mozart felt no need whatever to build up a philosophical *Weltanschauung*! He certainly had a keen intelligence and was no aimless dreamer in his creative work, but he was far from wishing to build his attitude on thought as such, let alone seek a complete philosophical system. In this sense he remained an artist, a man of the senses who observed and felt the world but entertained no concepts, following Goethe's maxim that we are made for living not for contemplation.

It is therefore a mistake to consider Mozart's personality in the light of the abstract world of ideas sometimes glimpsed in his work and letters. Not even his attitude to religion brings us to the essence of his feeling about the world, nor does his attitude to nature. At the centre of his world there is something quite different: namely man. Man is his yardstick in all things. Through the operation of his genius he comes to see that the struggle between the general and the individual is nowhere more evident than in a human being.

No wonder then that Mozart's art derives its greatest strength from his miraculous gift for observing human beings. It was an inherited gift for we already find it, though in a childish form, during his earliest years, in the remarkably sharp and clear characterizations of artists whom he meets—at first naturally performers, later also composers and their works. The first example of 7.1.1770 is typical:

'Il signor Afferi, un bravo cantante, un baritono, ma forced when he sings falsetto, but not as much as Tibaldi in Vienna. Bradamente . . . recita (under an assumed name, but I do not know it) ha una voce passabile, e la statura non sarebbe male,

ma distona come il diavolo. Ruggiero . . . un musico, canta un poco in the manner of Manzuoli ed ha una bellissima voce forte ed e gia vecchio, ha cinquantacinque anni ed ha una flexible throat. Leone (Frau Afferi) . . . ha una bellissima voce, ma e tanto susurro nel teatro che non si sente niente. Irene . . . has a muffled voice and always sings a semiquaver too late o troppo a buon' ora.'

There are other descriptions—of the Bernasconi, the two excellent organists of Mannheim, and especially of Wieland. The main characteristic is his determination to write the truth: even with good friends like Raaff he does not allow himself to be carried away into kindly idealizations, and he always remains objective despite all his sharpness and reticence in the matter of praise. Among his judgments there are few we would not agree with today. Moreover there is no trace of moral sentiment, but all is joy of observation as such and above all the effort to reproduce the essential character of the people described.

This gift of observing people, in which lies the source of Mozart's dramatic art, was partly inherited from his father. But the two made very different uses of it. For Leopold, the rationalist, the character of a man was directly related to his reason: he thought he could control his life by including all individual characters as precise sums in his clever system of calculations. For him, observation had the practical purpose of furthering his own material advantage. Wolfgang found it impossible to explain human character in terms of reason: each character appeared to him as a unique interplay of the different, ever-changing forces of the soul. The main occupation of his life consisted in examining an inexhaustible wealth of personalities and recreating them in his works. He had no preconceived criteria of morality or usefulness: people are what they are and not what they should be or what one would like them to be. Above all he does not consider people in the light of good or evil; how then could he possibly exploit his acute observation for the same ends as his father? This explains many things which seem strange, even incomprehensible to ordinary people of his and our time, especially that innocence and trust to the extent of helplessness in his dealings with others, which caused his father so many anxious hours. Mozart proves that one can be an inspired observer of the human race without understanding people in the usual practical sense.

On the other hand his approach saved him from the increasing bitterness and misanthropy of his father and led him to the greatest purity even in his outward dealings with people, precluding the musician's most common faults of envy and vanity.<sup>1</sup> The unedifying hunt for fame and success of the average artist was quite foreign to Mozart. Not that he was unaware of his own worth; but he was able to distinguish between an artist's pride and vanity. As he became more aware of his gifts he became more aware of himself. His greatest possession is his honour, to which he refers again and again in his letters; where it is a question of his artistic freedom he knows no fear of anyone. But he will fight only long enough to clear a

<sup>1</sup> Only in a superficial sense was Mozart vain: fastidiousness in matters of dress and a love of acting and dancing were characteristic of him. And we know he attached as much importance to a performer's appearance as to his musical qualities.

path for his genius, and is never guilty of envy and deceit to make capital for himself. He regarded less honest colleagues with an ironical smile. They could arouse neither hatred nor moral disapproval in him but only that interest which he showed in all new types of people he met.

He was naturally indisposed to improve or convert his fellow man. Here too he did not go beyond what his eye could see and what concerned his artistic personality. It was only at the close of his life, under the influence of Freemasonry, that an ethical tendency appeared in his art—in *The Magic Flute*—and even here the vague melancholy which fills this work in particular shows that the great realist saw the ideals set out as ideals, that is, as things scarcely attainable.

In the last resort this observation of others always brought Mozart back to himself. He came to know himself through others and not through brooding self-examination. He was far from forgetting himself in his study of others. Certainly his basic principle in human affairs was live and let live; but there is nothing impersonal behind this, no refusal to form his own moral behaviour. He did not believe that *tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*. Mozart was on the contrary a man of conscious morality, and for this he owed much to the healthy atmosphere of his parents' house, though that remarkable sure sense of moral behaviour was essentially quite his own. He was born good and kind, but the morality which he gradually created for himself was not a categorical duty, as it was for Beethoven with his spiritual affinity with Kant and Schiller; it was the automatic product of his nature. His morality was an inner necessity and so Mozart never fell into a narrow ethical outlook. Leopold's morality had its roots in rationalism but Wolfgang's grew out of humanity. His conscience was particularly highly developed and reveals the entire 18th century delicacy of feeling. It led him safely through the struggle with the Archbishop, and through the far harder one with his father, to what his conviction held to be his true goal; and it also led him without harm through the intrigues of the Weber family at the time of his engagement. But its most striking manifestation, though he never uttered a word on the subject, is to be found in Mozart's relations with Constanze after the first glow of passion had diminished and the realization became unavoidable that instead of having married someone of his own kind to whom he could reveal his innermost soul, he had tied himself to a woman who was no more than the ordinary companion of table and bed. The old saying that we are masters of the first step but servants of the second was also true in his case. Lesser spirits than his are dragged down by such conflicts to complete insensitiveness. But Mozart survived the painful struggle without suffering any inner damage. He did not try to educate his wife, but he was equally far from allowing his inner self to reject this woman whose existence was irrevocably bound to his own: in his natural goodness of heart he allowed her to take part in all those sides of his being which she could understand. The fact that these did not include the best and deepest in him had to be borne as an unavoidable and unalterable fate. What it cost him to have to go his way alone towards his highest aims was something to



be arranged with his conscience, for he fulfilled the duties brought on by the contrast between his world and his chosen marriage with real nobility to the end of his life.

Two other important qualities in Mozart's character spring from his supreme gift of human observation—humour and irony. There are appalling puns, improper jokes and much play with words and rhymes that is often quite nonsensical; in short it is obvious that he came from the town which invented that jovial character of South German pantomime, the *Hanswurst*, and at times one is reminded of the coarse-grained folk poetry of South West Germany. But it is characteristic that all these jokes are spontaneous; Mozart did not consciously set himself up as a buffoon. And most of them emerge from the uncontrollable desire to leap over the everyday norms and conventions which most of his contemporaries took so seriously. Even in the puns this is apparent. Fate had presented him with the name of Mozart—could he not equally well call himself Trazom or Romatz? (Another time he invented comical names for all his acquaintances. Even in his marriage documents he signed himself as Wolfgang Adam—instead of Amad.) His grotesque verses too appear in another light when one considers his views on rhyme—at least in later years. On a higher level is his composition of a Klopstockian Ode in a letter to his cousin, but it is signed 'Prince Pigtail'. (*Edler van Sauschwanz*.) His cousin Maria Thekla was the confidant of that side of his nature which could find satisfaction in the coarse enjoyment of the moment. And so in this ode he makes fun of thoughts of the infinite, that might disturb such simple enjoyment. In some of his comic reports on events, which are incidentally as drastic as scenes from *opera buffa*, there is already the higher level of humour also to be found in the works, a humour based on the ability to feel with the characters described and at the same time to view them objectively. For example, he understands perfectly how one can think and feel like Papageno, and thus manages to build the character from Papageno's point of view. But he also knows what Papageno does not know, that his is a narrow world and that he can never attain the highest ideal. The comic nature of Papageno lies in this contrast. Though Papageno is a descendant of the old *Hanswurst*, his comedy goes far deeper; Mozart makes an organic part of the drama out of that darling of the people who had been no more than a comical side-show.

It is particularly fascinating to observe how Mozart moves more and more from satire to irony as he inwardly leaves the Italian style. Osmin in the *Entführung* is essentially still a satirical figure: however clear and alive he is, we do not have the impression that he is really a part of Mozart himself, that his character was formed by some inner process. Osmin is still a figure of Italian *opera buffa*, though in its highest form. But from *Figaro* onwards we feel that Mozart has himself known the weaknesses and prejudices of his characters and is merely reproducing them from a slightly higher standpoint than theirs. Thus satire turns to that curiously warming irony, which the Italians fail to understand to this day. No other musical dramatist shows the same ability to live with the creatures of the moment and at the same time with the idealists, constantly keeping these contrasting sides in scale with each

other. Previous operas, whether serious or comic, had no surprise for the listener in matters of mood and depiction of character. But in Mozart's operas we never know whether the serious is not suddenly changing into the comic or the comic into the serious, and all this without any impression of chance but with the direct impression of life. Mozart was responsible for the step which opera took from the theatre to real drama.

Mozart's attitude to people also determined his relations to society and to the State. Society was in those days infinitely more important to the individual than it is nowadays; more important indeed than the State. It determined not only the outward life of the artist but his art as well. He wrote his works for a definite privileged section, in fact for society. Little wonder, then, that the smaller talents regarded man in society as the main subject of their art and would under no circumstances cross the bounds of feeling set by that society. It is true that in Mozart's operas, too, the various classes with their contrasts play a large part. Yet he was obviously not concerned with the classes as such but with the individuals representing them, with all their desires, qualities and weaknesses. Older operas would have thought of Count Almaviva as a Count in the first place and then as an individual, his amours being no more than a nobleman's diversion. But in Mozart's Count we find sensual passion in the first place constantly struggling with his self-awareness, while his rank is considered only in so far as it is the outward expression of that self-awareness, that claim on the old *droit du seigneur*. In short, Mozart's primary concern is not with society or with outward surroundings, but with human beings. He is absorbed by man as an individual, not by men as the result of outward circumstances. If, however, he does use local colour, as in the *Entführung*, it is more than mere ornament. The Osmins of older operas are just growling and blustering European philistines with oriental masks, but the Turkishness of Mozart's Osmin belongs to his character.

For this reason, too, Mozart never showed any interest in politics; the State was of even less importance than society, and political theories belonged to the realm of the abstract, which was too far from his dependence on the senses to mean anything to him. This was another great difference between Mozart and his father, for the latter's great interest in politics was much reflected in thought and deed. Wolfgang was more or less indifferent to political principles, only caring about the people who represented them, and was therefore never affected by political considerations in his choice of acquaintances. The excitement he reveals in 1782 when he proudly calls himself an *arch-Englishman* after the British success at Gibraltar, is very rare. These are momentary moods, and it is significant that the greatest political event of Mozart's time, the French Revolution, is never mentioned in his letters. He never speaks in general terms of freedom, equality, human rights and so on. If he came into contact with the partisans of these principles, as indeed he sometimes did among the Freemasons, it was the people and not the principles that impressed him. It would therefore be vain to seek Mozart's political principles in his letters.

We do occasionally meet certain democratic slogans, popular amongst the middle-classes of the time: nobility is conferred by the heart not by rank, the rich are incapable of friendship, the German nobility is niggardly. Even the honour of being in the Emperor's employ is not rated particularly high. His natural confidence never deserted him in aristocratic households. On the other hand he was quite happy in these circles for he found friends and warm admirers there, and above all completely lacked Beethoven's demonstrative manner of making his own superiority clear to the aristocracy. Thus in society again he kept to personalities and not to principles. He was as incapable of partisanship for a 'cause' as was Goethe; he held no opinions that did not originate in himself.

From all that has been said it is easy to see that Mozart was particularly susceptible to friendship. As he shut himself off from the world without hatred, so he searched all his life for a friend with whom to share his inner being. It was not only his delight in harmless sociability that always drove him into company, but also the urge to seek mutual interaction with another spirit, to let his own spirit work in others and in his turn to be enriched and have his life lightened by them. The more the ideal of humanity burned in him, the more he felt the urge to put into practice the brotherhood of man. In addition to this his natural goodness of heart made him ever ready to stand by his neighbour in time of material or spiritual need. Yet he never forced himself on anybody. On the contrary, his human observation gave him the ability to discover in individuals who attempted to approach him what they had to offer him, and to treat them accordingly. In this respect he behaved to his acquaintances as he did to his wife; he only gave them as much of himself as they could understand. Unwittingly comical people like Leutgeb brought out Mozart's playful side, the aristocracy brought out the cavalier in him; he revealed himself more fully to a few, such as Bullinger, Count Hatzfeldt and the Jacquin family, but he never revealed himself entirely to anyone. He had good friends who offered him as much love, respect and goodwill as they could, but who were unable to help him on his way through life. Mozart's relations with Joseph Haydn were on a different footing after they became personally acquainted. Haydn, the only genius of Mozart's acquaintance, could give what none of the others were able: not merely feminine, sentimental enthusiasm but also masculine criticism and above all understanding for the inner needs of artistic creation. But Haydn belonged to a previous generation, and even to him entire sides of Mozart's character remained a closed book; moreover Haydn, a child of the people, lacked the ability and the desire to think about these contrasts. It is characteristic that Haydn's artistic influence on Mozart, which had previously been significant enough but of varying strength, became stronger and more constant once the two men were friends. Again we see how much more vividly Mozart felt the influence of personalities than of abstract tendencies and systems.

In Mozart's experience love plays an even more important part than friendship. Once he had reached maturity he was never without it; but we must remember that the creative artist experiences everything, including love, quite differently from the



ordinary man, however unprejudiced. Passion is essentially part of his being, it does not need to be fanned by a particular affair. This is what Beethoven meant when he declared that he had 'never been without a love', and in Mozart too the urge to love was constantly alive. This urge itself is of primary importance to the creative artist; its application in individual cases merely belongs to the realm of chance and seldom brings fulfilment to the artist's longing. It was Mozart's fate never to see his dream realized as Robert Schumann could in his union with Clara. He was near to it for a time with Aloysia Weber, later perhaps with Frau von Trattner. But with his wife Constanze he found himself further and further from his aim and was forced to put up with the next best thing as an artist and as a human being.<sup>2</sup> The urge to love that lay dormant in him remained untouched by the renunciation of real love in his life. On the contrary, it reveals itself increasingly as the motive force in his dramatic art. It has been emphasized, and rightly so, that the fundamental theme of Mozart's operas is love. Of course love was always the central subject of opera from the very beginning and will doubtless remain so, if only on account of the sensuous character of music itself. But Mozart's handling of this old theme was entirely new. In the early operas, through lack of personal experience, he still treats love as *galanterie*. But later on he sees it as something quite different, an elemental force of nature which, coming into contact with other forces within a man will raise him or throw him down, will free him or destroy him—but, either way, must inevitably command his fate. There are clearly no moral criteria, no ideas of good or evil in such an elemental phenomenon: love for Mozart can be neither sin nor redemption. He does not exclude the concept of love founded on morality, for that also is one of the realities of life, but he cannot regard it as an ideal. In fact Mozart is particularly fond of contrasting the various kinds of love within one drama; he does so especially in *Don Giovanni* and even in *The Magic Flute*, although in the latter case from a somewhat ethical point of view. So we meet the most varied expressions of this natural force in Mozart's work: indeed he has not his equal in opera for the diversity of his experience and artistic representation of love. But in his life too these different kinds of love constantly alternated, according to the different women that aroused them. Here he resembles Don Giovanni, who always suits the expression of his love to the character of whatever woman he is trying to conquer. His love of Aloysia is imbued with the purest idealism, whereas his relations with his cousin, though very affectionate and cheerful, were dominated by an exceptional delight in everything primitive, even animal—and not only in erotic matters. We know this from the letters, though they should not be taken alone as essential documents. They can only

<sup>2</sup> The change in his attitude to marriage is significant. He writes to his father from Mannheim on February 7th, 1778: 'I want to make my wife happy and not to achieve my happiness through her'. During the first Vienna period he still resisted all ideas of marriage because he 'had quite different things in his head'. But within half a year he wrote his father the well-known letter which regards marriage as anything rather than idealistic: 'Nature is as strong in me as in any other man, perhaps stronger than in many a big lout'. He now brings up bed, table and house as grounds for marriage. Though some of this suits Leopold's way of thinking, being designed to persuade him, it also shows that increasing contact with Constanze is gradually leading Mozart to the realization that he is not to know intimacy with a woman who is his spiritual and moral equal.

be understood through Mozart's personality as a whole, as the expressions of a man of the senses who will not exclude even the most primitive side of human life. The difference between him and his contemporaries is merely that they considered these things important enough to be brought out in art, whereas it is only in the figure of Papageno that they appear in Mozart's artistic world.

Here we already find apparently irreconcilable contrasts in Mozart's character. But they form only a fraction of all those that exist within him. Their discovery is one of the most important results of more recent research into Mozart, as against the older opinion which saw in Mozart's personality a definite unity of forces striving towards the same ends, and supposed it had reached the depth of his soul in this description. It used to be thought that the artist could be forced into a clear-cut formula that controlled his entire artistic and human expression. The fatal error of this was recognized through the study of the works. It is clearly impossible to find such a formula, unless it be that compulsion to shape and to create which is discernible in all his works and in most of his letters. But the forces which set this in motion remain in darkness as much as ever. It has recently been fashionable to bring in Schiller's well-known theory, expounded in his *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*. But Schiller himself was particularly cautious about applying this theory to individuals; he well knew that nature, which creates the genius, does not produce sharply differentiated types. And Mozart's personality cannot be clearly consigned to one or other of these categories. It contains much that is *naïve*, but it knows too the discord of a life that has lost its unity, from which Schiller obtains his concept of *sentimentalisch*. We have only to compare Mozart with the far more *naïve* Haydn in order to see the whole difference. Mozart himself hardly ever laid bare his most personal problems in his letters. But those sudden changes of mood, which characterize his music from his very first symphony, show that this contrasting nature of experience was fundamental to him. It later made him into a great dramatist in a way that would otherwise have been unthinkable. To build the foundation of a drama he had only to take the contrasting moods of his own personality and personify them, thus splitting up his ego to create the different characters. Here too we come upon the deepest source of his art of human observation: it was because he was capable of such multifarious experience that he always found an object on which to employ his gift. To him every individual was something new and inexplicable, a unique combination of spiritual forces which fascinated him.

Thus he could create apparently simple characters of unfathomable complexity. Above all he does not see them in a state of constant repose as did Gluck, but in the eternal movement of nature, and the experiences he reproduces as an absolute musician are also full of the same contrasts. We can follow this daemonic trait with its meteoric appearances of passion in detail in Mozart's instrumental works. H. G. Nägeli described Mozart in 1826, and not with particular approval, as 'shepherd and king, ingratiating and tempestuous' who 'frequently alternates soft melody with harsh passages, grace of movement with violence'. There is no doubt that, especially in

his early days, he was a great lover of life; but it was only the sudden incursions of pain and passion, even of renunciation of the world, that first gave this love of life a fuller basis. As his experience grew in ripeness and depth so these moods increased too, and in some of the later works the relationship of the contrast was reversed: now passion was relieved by serenity. So the understanding of Mozart's personality never suffered more than in the days of romanticism when the adherents of that other *Sturm und Drang*, including the young Schumann, were so much influenced by their titanic concept of an (imperfectly understood) Beethoven that they were unable to discover the spiritual depths of Mozart's art. Certainly Mozart never belonged to the Titans in his life nor in his art, however many of the old gods he had knocked down; for he did so without struggle or denunciation but merely in the expression and free development of his own being. But he also had to leave behind the *Sturm und Drang* of his own day, for it was not his aim to create a revolution for its own sake, but to take that seething world and shape it in his own way. He does not share the dark uncontrollable passion nor that other evil of the age—excessive sentimentality.

Of course he too is affected by the tender-heartedness of the age of Rousseau. The playing of Rose Cannabich moves him to tears, and he confesses to his father after the Aloysia catastrophe: 'Today I can do nothing but weep; my heart is really too tender'. But he is far from the floods of tears in which persons of delicate sensibility used to indulge, and above all in his art he was kept from being wholly submerged by feeling through his constant urge to give form to it. He strives to achieve the plastic representation of reality and not sentimental effusions for their own sake. One has only to compare a sentimental aria of J. C. Bach with one of Mozart's in order to recognize the difference. It would therefore be quite false to attribute to Mozart such a sentimental answer as he is supposed to have given when offered a post in Berlin: 'How can I leave my good Emperor?' On the contrary, Mozart was a typical child of the rococo age, in being able to suppress the pain within him or even conceal it behind wild jokes. Lange reports that Mozart was never so much given to making silly jokes as when engaged on a major work. Mozart's works are sufficient proof of his ability to ennoble the tenderness of the age through his art. We have only to look at the sufferers in his operas: Constanze, the Countess, Donna Anna, Pamina; they all float in the same soft, sweet atmosphere and yet their humanity allows no room for sentimentality.

Mozart was not a problematical character in the modern sense. He sought no ideals outside himself: his only aim was to allow his inner faculties to come to maturity. Unlike Beethoven he never thought about the ideal of freedom in all its forms nor about self-determination in Kant's sense. Thus he never knew the heroic struggle with an impersonal fate from which Beethoven's massive will drew its greatest strength. There were probably few great minds of that period in Germany so far removed from Kant's way of thinking as Mozart's was. His whole working life in fact resembles a remarkable natural process, the object of which is the fullest



possible development of all his relevant powers. The greatness of his unique genius is due to the fact that these powers were as strong and natural as they were multifarious, and that an irresistible creative force brought them to harmonious unity. It was only in this way that he could give a symbolical nature to his characters and raise them to universal types while yet allowing them to retain their individuality.

The free development of his true self, which, as we have seen, was the real object of Mozart's life, did not take place without hindrances and crises. These always arrived when a certain cycle of spiritual experience was exhausted in him, in other words when some rearrangement of inner forces took place, which occurred twice in his career: between *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*, and then in the last year of his life before *The Magic Flute*. These transitions were accompanied by overwhelming inner experiences that were released in one or more monumental works deviating essentially in style from those that had gone before; it is as though a fresh torrent was springing into the old river-bed from an unknown crevice and turning the whole course in a new un-anticipated direction. But it is no coincidence that Mozart's dark and pessimistic tendencies become particularly noticeable during these critical phases. Those feelings of dread which flash across Mozart's music are the expression of an inner crisis, the mirror of an inner disturbance that sometimes borders on insanity. It is also most probable that these short successive inner crises acted outwards as well and affected the delicate constitution of his body. Mozart certainly began to sicken at the time of *Don Giovanni* and never fully recovered his health.

He was far less interested in nature than in human beings. His impressions of the Italian journeys show him unmistakably a child of his unromantic age. And we have no evidence that he later ever appreciated the wild and powerful elements in nature. (But nor did Beethoven.) The few descriptions we know are of agreeable garden-like landscapes. He writes in a typically eighteenth century way about the district around Reichenberg (13.7.1781):

'The little house is nothing much, but the country—the forest—in which my host has built a grotto which looks just as if Nature herself had fashioned it! Indeed the surroundings are magnificent and very delightful.'

In 1788 he praises his residence outside Vienna for having a garden; (and here he wrote the great E flat Symphony). *Don Giovanni* and *The Magic Flute* too were largely written in garden houses. Rochlitz tells us that Mozart used to be inspired by nature while travelling through beautiful districts, complaining of his confinement indoors when working. But it never occurred to him to travel for the sake of enjoying nature or of stimulating his artistic production through it, nor does he have Beethoven's enthusiasm for nature. In his earliest works we come across all the well-known features of Italian opera—sea pieces, rococo idylls with lilting breezes, nocturnes of a charming and fantastic kind, in short all the details in which love of nature found its poetic form at that time. But from *Idomeneo* onwards, a new feeling appears which finds its artistic form in pieces like Susanna's *Deh vieni*. Landscape and the

processes of nature are now no longer a background of unalterable character, but are brought into relationship with human feelings. In place of minutely sketched natural processes, the feelings now bring forth a subjective picture in which nature and sentiment intermingle. Compare Susanna's aria with the previous evening idylls. It contains far less painting than feeling (to use Beethoven's description of the *Pastoral* Symphony); it is a subjective experience of nature but fragrant with an indefinable air that is not to be found even in the most brilliant of the older musical pictures. Of course this shows once again that the mature Mozart was more interested in human beings than in nature. But it was also typical of him that when he did concern himself directly with nature he was no longer satisfied with mere description. Impressions of nature are more common in his instrumental music than is generally supposed, as careful listening will readily reveal; and here again he was following older patterns, for one of the main features of Austrian instrumental folk music was the special value it laid on the landscape of the country as well as on its people. Scenes by a brook or in a forest, bird song of all kinds etc. were quite common, and found their way with particular ease into serenade music which was of course performed in the open. Mozart knew these pictures of nature well, and used them in different ways—from purely external, often half-humorous imitations of natural sounds to that animation of the spirit of nature which is sometimes to be found in the slow movements. Admittedly he is concerned only with the graceful, idyllic side of nature, for there is no trace of sublime or fantastic elements.

All sources are unanimous that Mozart was particularly fond of animals; his pets—dogs and birds—come into his letters a great deal. For a time he went riding every day in Vienna on medical advice, but he never became an enthusiastic horseman, for he was unable to rid himself of a certain fear of horses.

Mozart's attitude to religion, though largely dictated by his environment and education, nevertheless developed according to the rest of his character. His father naturally brought him up to be a strict Roman Catholic; and we therefore find Wolfgang sharing his attitude, though less strongly, about other creeds, rigidly separating Lutheran composers from others and wishing, as late as 1778, to be employed at a Catholic court. As a matter of fact he remained a faithful member of the Catholic Church until the end of his life, even though he came to regard its dogmas more critically. This is understandable enough. His whole nature demanded sensuous experience as a starting point; his entire world of thought and creation could only be built on this. Such was his nature and Catholicism came of all creeds nearest to it. Did it not also proceed from the sensuous and tangible on its way to the symbol? Throughout the period of his adolescence Mozart's entire outward relationship to religion is clearly under his father's influence. His words of 24.10.77 still sound, even in their actual expression, like an echo of Leopold's belief:

'God is ever before my eyes. I realize His omnipotence and I fear His anger; but I also recognize His love, His compassion, and His tenderness towards His creatures.

He will never forsake His own. If it is according to His will, so let it be according to mine. Thus all will be well and I must needs be happy and contented.'

Later on there are fewer references to religion in the letters; we notice that Mozart becomes freer in his views without abandoning the basis of his Catholic beliefs. We must not exaggerate the seriousness of Mozart's occasional attacks on priests which became more frequent after his entry into the Masonic order, for after all one of his best friends, Bullinger, was a priest. Here, as always, he was concerned with individuals rather than with an entire order. Of more significance are Leopold's pressing enquiries about his son's attendance at Mass and confession, which at least imply that he had little confidence in Wolfgang's fulfilment of his religious duties. The latter certainly began to interpret certain teachings of the Church, such as those on fasting, in his own way. Far more important, however, is the fact that already in his early years Mozart began to show himself a mystic as well as an outward observer of dogma. The church music of his youth, both in its quantity and in its character, is a clear proof of his need for religion. And here it is especially the verses of a mystical kind, such as the *Qui tollis* and *Et incarnatus est*, that are profoundly experienced. This is the first emergence of the desire to pass over all the obstacles of dogma and reason in order to arrive at a direct contemplation of God, and to experience within himself what official religion tried to lay down in outward doctrines. Mozart expresses a true mystical longing for what lies beyond this world; and this should always be remembered when his 'joy of life' is stressed, as it so often is.

On the other hand, death and resurrection occupied Mozart much less in his youth than later. A belief in the immortality of man, in eternal bliss and in a reunion with all his loved ones was a natural consequence of his type of religious faith. In the Masses of his youth we can tell from his treatment especially of the *et vitam venturi saeculi* that he is still bound by dogma in this matter. As always, he needed a personal experience to bring him to a more strongly defined attitude. This came with the death of his mother in Paris, about which he writes to his father:

'In those distressing moments, there were three things that consoled me—my entire and steadfast submission to the will of God, and the sight of her very easy and beautiful death which made me feel that in a moment she had become so happy; for how much happier is she now than we are! Indeed I wished at that moment to depart with her. From this wish and longing proceeded finally my third source of consolation—the thought that she is not lost to us forever—that we shall see her again—that we shall live together far more happily and blissfully than ever in this world.'

After the death of Dr. Barisani in 1787 he expresses similar thoughts:

'He is happy now—but all of us who knew him well will never be happy until we see him, never to be parted again, in a better world.'

From this time on, Mozart becomes more and more intensely occupied with thoughts



of death and immortality. He was particularly grateful to Freemasonry for the help it gave him in this direction. Here we must mention the famous passage in his last letter to his father, on April 4th, 1787. Leopold was already a very sick man, and it is remarkable how his son almost acquires clairvoyance, being already at peace in his world about this impending loss and bringing to his father philosophical consolation, as to one who is prepared for his last journey.

'As death, when we come to consider it closely, is the true goal of our existence, I have formed during the last few years such close relations with this best and truest friend of mankind, that his image is not only no longer terrifying to me, but is indeed very soothing and consoling! And I thank my God for graciously granting me the opportunity (you know what I mean) of learning that death is the key which unlocks the door to our true happiness. I never lie down at night without reflecting that— young as I am—I may not live to see another day. Yet no one of all my acquaintances could say that in company I am morose or disgruntled. For this blessing I daily thank my Creator and wish with all my heart that each one of my fellow creatures could enjoy it.'

Here it is no longer a naïve acceptance of dogma that is involved, but an inner experience—namely the realization that death too is natural and cannot therefore be an object of fear. Death does not come to judge or to destroy, but to fulfil a natural law that lies within us; he can only be our friend, not our enemy. Connected with this is his belief in immortality, not in the dogmatic sense of the Church, but of a mystical kind, which was perhaps common in Masonic circles at that day. (It is quite possible that Mozart was also influenced in these beliefs by Mendelssohn's *Phädon* which was found in his library.) For Mozart does not speak here of eternal life, of *vita venturi saeculi* in the sense of the Church, but of 'our true happiness'. The lack of a concept of divine judgment is also very characteristic: for Mozart the after-life signified a purification from all the dross of this world, in fact the final fulfilment of his longing for a higher form of vision and experience than was granted on earth.

The mystical trait must not be overlooked. It adds a further contrast to our picture of the great realist. This trait too did not always emerge with the same strength and frequently changed both the form and the object of its activity. But it was the chief motive for Mozart's eventual entry into the Masonic order, through which he hoped to still that dark urge, which all men feel but especially those who create, the urge to investigate the mysteries of one's own life.

There has recently been a good deal of discussion of Mozart's general education in the literary, philosophical and historical sense. Niemetschek regrets 'that this man so marvellous as an artist was not a great man in the other aspects of life', whilst there are enthusiasts amongst the later biographers who are incapable of conceiving a great man otherwise than as the possessor of every imaginable virtue and ability. Added to this came the idea of measuring culture according to the ideal

of the poet and the statesman, an idea that has grown in popularity since the Romantic movement and that naturally stands in the gigantic shadow of Goethe.

But one must not forget that literary and historical knowledge is of far greater importance to the poet and politician than to the musician. Certainly a musical talent cannot and should not dispense with all culture outside music, for it needs this in order to orientate itself in the world, quite apart from the rich sources it may offer to the imagination. The older musicians knew very well why they studied at universities, while more recent ones have the actual example of the romantics' thorough general education before them. The musician who is nothing but a musician has never been a very distinguished figure. But if we conceive culture, not as the sum of acquired knowledge, but as the artist's ability to penetrate the diversity of the world around him with his own personality and to form his own world, then it means new sources of inspiration, which can be even richer according to the strength of his genius. We must beware of judging a genius by the standards of the completely uncultured man and also by those of the man of mere talent, whose inner experience is not strong enough to allow him to dispense with outer stimuli. Mozart's genius did possess this power of inner experience. No one will deny that in his mature works he mirrored and thus gave a form to all the worthwhile forces of his age with a purity that is only equalled by Goethe amongst his contemporaries. But his astonishingly wide knowledge was not derived from literary, historical or political studies but from his own ability to observe human beings and to penetrate to the motive forces within them. He never makes a conscious effort to hold up a mirror to his age or to picture its civilization. At the same time his works display such a rich culture that we would do well not to worry too much about their 'unliterary' author.

Moreover, Mozart was not as uncultured as we are sometimes led to believe today. Certainly the musicians of that time were not highly educated, the Austrians, including Haydn, being less so than the north Germans. But Mozart had the advantage of being brought up in the university town of Salzburg and by a man of wide knowledge and pedagogic inclination. Not that Leopold's attempt at a systematic education for his son was successful, for the latter's culture was determined throughout his life by mere chance and not by a definite plan. We learn this particularly from the haphazard character of his library, the main works of which were by Gessner, E. von Kleist, Wieland, Metastasio, Molière, Frederick the Great and Moses Mendelssohn. Still, we should not draw over-hasty conclusions. His earliest literary impressions were probably Gellert and Count Stolberg, that is, the poets of Protestant Enlightenment; though apparently Wolfgang did not share his father's taste for such poets, with the exception of Wieland, in whom he must have recognized many sides of his own character—his sensitive adaptability, his power of absorbing and recreating impressions, and his general passivity towards people and things. Later he also came to know Klopstock, though the latter's pathos was certainly foreign to him. That is why he does not finish his setting of the Klopstockian *Ode on Calpe* by the Viennese Jesuit, Michael Denis, in 1782. Mozart says of it:

'The ode is sublime, beautiful, anything you like, but too exaggerated and pompous for my fastidious ears. But what is to be done? The golden mean of truth in all things is no longer either known or appreciated. In order to win applause one must write stuff which is so inane that a *fiacre* could sing it, or so unintelligible that it pleases precisely because no sensible man can understand it.'

This is the complete realist again. Mozart was always further removed from Klopstock's excesses than from the poetry of the people, and here we may find traces of his Swabian ancestry, for his harmless little occasional verses and the coarse, popular side of his wit and humour in general are of this character.

Apart from the composition of *Das Veilchen*, we have no proof that Mozart knew the works of Lessing, Herder, Goethe and Schiller. This does not mean that he had no acquaintance with them at all, for if he was not a keen reader, he *was* an enthusiastic theatre-goer. Already in his Salzburg days there were plenty of opportunities to see plays apart from school-room comedies in the style of *Apollo et Hyacinthus*. Even amateurs were enthusiastic performers of fashionable plays, especially of *comédies larmoyantes*, and in the Archbishop's theatre one could see not only opera but also such works as Corneille's *Polieucte*. After 1775 the new town theatre was visited by touring companies, including those of Böhm and Schikaneder. Böhm already had *Romeo and Juliet* and Lessing's *Minna von Barnhelm* in his repertoire in the early seventies, and Schikaneder put on *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *King Lear* as well as Leisewitz's *Julius von Tarent* and Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* in Salzburg. We know definitely that Mozart saw at least *Hamlet* and took a very strong interest in Schikaneder's Salzburg performances. The next stage of Mozart's literary education was Mannheim with its nationalist tendencies, which extended to opera and left a deep impression on him. Again there was Shakespeare, the plays being *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* and an increasing number of amateur efforts mocked by Wieland. In Paris he came across the main seat of literary taste, in fact in Mme. d'Epinay's salon he found himself in the midst of the circle which set the cultural fashion of the day. Mozart's letters betray little of this; we only know that he knew something of Voltaire's and Rousseau's works, though he may not have read them. The theatre at Munich presented a similar aspect to that of Mannheim, a definitely national tendency with a powerful strain of dilletantism and local patriotism. At the time of the *Finta giardiniera* Mozart often went to the theatre there and might have seen Lessing's *Miss Sara Sampson* and *Minna von Barnhelm*, as well as German translations of Molière, Marivaux, Regnard and Diderot; his later librettist, Stephanie Jr., was represented by some comedies. At the time when he was greatly occupied with *Idomeneo* we have definite evidence only of his having seen Dyk's *Essex*, but we learn little of his impressions from his letters. The letters from Vienna are more informative, revealing Mozart's active partisanship in the burning question of the day—the struggle between drama according to the unities and the lighter comedy of the *Hanswurst*. His love of the theatre was at its height at this time. 'I wish you were here to see a tragedy', he writes to his sister in 1781, 'I have never known a



theatre where every sort of play is excellently performed; but here every part is—in fact the smallest, worst parts have excellent understudies.’ According to this he was as strongly impressed by tragedies of the Sonnenfels-Ayrenhoff school, that he already knew from Gebler’s *Thamos*, as by the people’s theatre with its popular figures which he was soon to transfigure in his own work. It has recently been stressed, and rightly so, that he was also influenced by the serious Viennese drama of the day, of the kind that was to become typical of the Burgtheater. Here too we only possess a few fragments of information from Mozart’s letters. His choice of texts for his songs betrays anything but thorough literary consideration. It ranges from Chr. Gunther to Goethe’s *Veilchen*, which only came into his hands through a happy chance. But we must remember that the *Lied* was not a high form of art at that time but merely for use in the home and in company. There was no idea yet of recreating the poem in the spirit of the music. It was Goethe who loosened the tongue of musical lyricism as he had that of poetical lyricism. Mozart’s *Veilchen* is a beautiful example of the new sources that sprang up under the poet’s magic influence. But in general the *Lied* was still a sideline for Mozart which he touched only occasionally and as a result of external stimulus. He poured the lyrical wealth within him into his instrumental compositions, not into the song. But as to the textual side of his operas, we know that he not only gave thorough consideration to every important question, but was far above most contemporary librettists in discernment and taste.

On the other hand he showed little interest in the pictorial arts and in history, although his father had taken him as a boy to many galleries and collections and had tried in Italy and later to awaken his historical sense. But he seems to have had some talent as a draughtsman. In 1770 in Rome he drew ‘St. Peter with his keys, St. Paul with his sword and St. Luke with my sister, etc., etc.’; and in 1783 in Linz he sketched for his wife an *Ecce homo* that he particularly liked. In his letters too there are some rather primitive examples of this talent. His sister speaks of his skill at drawing and arithmetic.

How much did he know of the history of his own art? The musical library he left is very modest and no less haphazard than his literary library, being the result largely of gifts and chance. The conditions of the music trade at that time made it difficult even for a wealthier musician to acquire a good collection. But Mozart’s library can certainly not have been the entire source of his musical knowledge, which stretched from the old Italian vocal music down to his contemporaries Gluck and Haydn and included vocal and instrumental music of all kinds. In his earliest years his father had acquainted him with the local tradition of Salzburg and Vienna and also with the northern style of Berlin and Leipzig which Leopold admired so much. His journeys led him to all the musical centres of the time; in Italy, Mannheim and Paris he came into direct contact with aesthetic wars which were particularly fierce in that age of ferment. Padre Martini also gave him a thorough knowledge of old Italian music, which strongly caught the young Mozart’s imagination, and he was eminently suited to the task of interesting him in musical history as such. Later, as

a mature master, he absorbed the music of Handel and Bach in so far as it was available. It is clear that in the matter of a universal musical education he can have been surpassed by few of his contemporaries.

Yet it was anything but an inclination for musical history in the modern sense that was responsible for this. Mozart was not interested in the historical tradition nor in the development of ideas which the modern historian discovers behind the complex of musical personalities. He was concerned only with the individual artist and his art, and only in so far as they had something to offer him. He was not content to understand, he had to create and form, to make this other art into a part of his own. The ability to place oneself entirely within the artistic feeling of the past was only valued and perfected by the romantics; the elements of older music in Mozart were naturally assimilated by his very receptive nature and not conscious historical quotations.

Though we possess a comparatively large number of portraits it is not easy to form an idea of Mozart's outward appearance. Apart from those portraits that are spurious or else idealize him quite flagrantly, there are remarkable divergences even amongst the more life-like pictures. It was clearly not easy to hold him fast in a picture, for when not at the piano his body was always in movement and his facial expressions constantly changed. This shows him to have been very highly strung, not from birth—for the Vienna picture in gala dress of 1762 shows an entirely healthy, red-cheeked cheerful little boy—but apparently as a result of the strenuous journeys of his youth. For Mozart was naturally a healthy, if delicate, child, and his weakness, which showed itself in frequent attacks of sickness, was only gradually acquired, partly through physical overstrain and partly through the restless and unregulated work to which his genius drove him. His father must take some of the responsibility, but it must be remembered that the care nowadays taken of children's health was then unknown. The principle of *mens sana in corpore sano* was not applied, certainly not to a musician's child, and so Mozart's physical development was not only outstripped by his mental development but never became complete at all. He always remained, in his sister's words: 'small, thin and pale, without pretension in physiognomy and body'. The fact that his head was very large in proportion to his body is a sign of the unevenness in the development of body and mind. The best description of Mozart's outward appearance is given by Niemetschek:

'There was nothing remarkable about the physical appearance of this exceptional man; he was small and, if we except his large, fiery eyes, there was nothing in his face to indicate his great genius. His eyes seemed restless and distracted, except when he was at the piano; then his entire expression would change! His plain appearance and the undeveloped nature of his physique were the result of early mental strain and lack of exercise in his childhood. His parents were good-looking, as he too is said to have been as a child, but from the age of six he was bound for life to a sedentary occupation, for it was at this age that he began to compose! And

how much he wrote, especially in the last years! As Mozart preferred to play and compose at night and his work was often of an urgent nature, it is easy to imagine how much such a delicate physique was bound to suffer! His early death must be ascribed largely to these causes.' This shows clearly that Mozart's original sensitiveness in the course of time turned often enough to a nervous state which increased with the gradual physical exhaustion of the last years to neurotic irritability. He was pained by his ordinary appearance and it was obviously for this reason that he set such value on his dress. He was also particularly proud of his beautiful, small hands; it must have been an aesthetic pleasure merely to have *seen* him play the piano. His sister-in-law Haibl even reports that he used to 'play the piano' with other things—hats, handbags, watch-chain, tables or chairs.

Apart from its size his head was not unusual. Only the formation of his ears was remarkable: he had no ear-lobes and the shape of the ear was different from that of other people. But there is nothing freakish about this 'Mozart ear', and it had of course no connexion with the actual hearing organism. He had thick blonde hair. Mozart's frequent illnesses and unhealthy way of life were responsible for the pallor of his face and for the distracted and often dull look in his blue eyes which gazed absently at the world around him, only catching fire when he sat down at a piano. At that moment he cast aside everything unessential, trivial or oppressive, and it seemed as though another being awoke in him.

His other features contained nothing to indicate the exceptional nature of the man. The lines are neither soft nor particularly hard. The broad but not unusually high forehead recedes and makes an almost straight line with the nose, only being separated from it by a small indentation. The nose, which appears from portraits to have been inherited from the mother, was rather large, as contemporaries noticed. The mouth was normal but expressive, the upper-lip rather large, the corners of the mouth going up a little. The chin was weakly developed and certainly gave no indication of exceptional energy.

If this makes Mozart appear as anything but handsome and impressive, he nevertheless had some charm in his youth. The fresh, intelligent and still unwearied face that looks out of these pictures betrays a healthy self-confidence. Towards the end of his life Mozart's gradual collapse becomes noticeable in the portraits too.

It is understandable that his admirers have always tried to idealize Mozart as a man and as an artist. It was the romantics who did most to introduce that vague sentimentality, especially when Mozart was accorded the doubtful honour of being appointed an antipope to the new German music of Wagner and Liszt. Not only his art but his personality suffered from this. More recently the romantic mists have lifted and allowed Mozart to appear before the world not only as a universal artist but also as a great and rich personality.

NOTE: The quotations from Mozart's letters are in Emily Anderson's translation, and are reprinted by her kind permission and by that of Macmillan & Co.



## SONNET

ALEKSANDR HELMANN

Cupo e Mesto (♩ = 80)

Handwritten musical score for "SONNET" by Aleksandr Helmann. The score is written on four systems of grand staves (treble and bass clef). It features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes, and various dynamic markings such as *p*, *pp*, *f*, *mf*, and *mp*. The tempo is marked "Cupo e Mesto" with a quarter note equal to 80 beats per minute. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The score includes performance instructions like "leggiadramente" and "Ped." (pedal). The piece concludes with a final cadence marked by a double bar line and a fermata.

Handwritten musical score for piano, consisting of six systems of staves. The notation includes complex chords, arpeggios, and various dynamics and articulation markings.

**System 1:** Dynamics include *pp* and *p*. Articulation includes slurs and accents.

**System 2:** Dynamics include *f*, *p*, and *mf*. Includes the instruction *Gopra*.

**System 3:** Dynamics include *pp*, *f*, and *p*. Includes the instruction *20 (7 7 7 7)*.

**System 4:** Dynamics include *f*, *ff*, *pp*, and *p*. Includes the instruction *rit.*

**System 5:** Dynamics include *f* and *ff*. Includes the instruction *8a*.

**System 6:** Dynamics include *p*, *dim*, and *pp*. Includes the instruction *Più mosso* and *senza pedale* (twice).

Handwritten musical score for "L'Espresso" by Giuseppe Verdi. The score is written on ten systems of staves, featuring piano and vocal parts. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like "sempre incalzando", "f", "ff", "p", and "sfz". The lyrics "L'Espresso" are written in Italian. The score is numbered 40, 50, and 60 at the beginning of the systems.



Handwritten musical score for piano and voice. The score is written on ten systems of staves. The piano part is in the left hand, and the voice part is in the right hand. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes various dynamic markings such as *f*, *ff*, *p*, *sfz*, *sf*, *mf*, and *ff*. It also features tempo and performance instructions like *ancora più mosso*, *p subito*, *sempre*, *sempre ff*, and *accelerando*. The music is characterized by complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. The voice part has lyrics written below the notes, including "c r e s c e n d o", "c r e s c e n d o", "sempre", and "inquieto". The score ends with a double bar line and the number 8.

Handwritten musical score for piano, page 31. The score consists of six systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and 4/4 time. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings. Performance instructions like *stringendo*, *con rabbia*, *quasi tempo primo*, *sempre*, *pedale*, *leggero*, and *riten* are written above the staves. Measure numbers 80, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, 92, 94, 96, 98, 100, 102, 104, 106, 108, 110, 112, 114, 116, 118, 120, 122, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132, 134, 136, 138, 140, 142, 144, 146, 148, 150, 152, 154, 156, 158, 160, 162, 164, 166, 168, 170, 172, 174, 176, 178, 180, 182, 184, 186, 188, 190, 192, 194, 196, 198, 200, 202, 204, 206, 208, 210, 212, 214, 216, 218, 220, 222, 224, 226, 228, 230, 232, 234, 236, 238, 240, 242, 244, 246, 248, 250, 252, 254, 256, 258, 260, 262, 264, 266, 268, 270, 272, 274, 276, 278, 280, 282, 284, 286, 288, 290, 292, 294, 296, 298, 300, 302, 304, 306, 308, 310, 312, 314, 316, 318, 320, 322, 324, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 336, 338, 340, 342, 344, 346, 348, 350, 352, 354, 356, 358, 360, 362, 364, 366, 368, 370, 372, 374, 376, 378, 380, 382, 384, 386, 388, 390, 392, 394, 396, 398, 400, 402, 404, 406, 408, 410, 412, 414, 416, 418, 420, 422, 424, 426, 428, 430, 432, 434, 436, 438, 440, 442, 444, 446, 448, 450, 452, 454, 456, 458, 460, 462, 464, 466, 468, 470, 472, 474, 476, 478, 480, 482, 484, 486, 488, 490, 492, 494, 496, 498, 500, 502, 504, 506, 508, 510, 512, 514, 516, 518, 520, 522, 524, 526, 528, 530, 532, 534, 536, 538, 540, 542, 544, 546, 548, 550, 552, 554, 556, 558, 560, 562, 564, 566, 568, 570, 572, 574, 576, 578, 580, 582, 584, 586, 588, 590, 592, 594, 596, 598, 600, 602, 604, 606, 608, 610, 612, 614, 616, 618, 620, 622, 624, 626, 628, 630, 632, 634, 636, 638, 640, 642, 644, 646, 648, 650, 652, 654, 656, 658, 660, 662, 664, 666, 668, 670, 672, 674, 676, 678, 680, 682, 684, 686, 688, 690, 692, 694, 696, 698, 700, 702, 704, 706, 708, 710, 712, 714, 716, 718, 720, 722, 724, 726, 728, 730, 732, 734, 736, 738, 740, 742, 744, 746, 748, 750, 752, 754, 756, 758, 760, 762, 764, 766, 768, 770, 772, 774, 776, 778, 780, 782, 784, 786, 788, 790, 792, 794, 796, 798, 800, 802, 804, 806, 808, 810, 812, 814, 816, 818, 820, 822, 824, 826, 828, 830, 832, 834, 836, 838, 840, 842, 844, 846, 848, 850, 852, 854, 856, 858, 860, 862, 864, 866, 868, 870, 872, 874, 876, 878, 880, 882, 884, 886, 888, 890, 892, 894, 896, 898, 900, 902, 904, 906, 908, 910, 912, 914, 916, 918, 920, 922, 924, 926, 928, 930, 932, 934, 936, 938, 940, 942, 944, 946, 948, 950, 952, 954, 956, 958, 960, 962, 964, 966, 968, 970, 972, 974, 976, 978, 980, 982, 984, 986, 988, 990, 992, 994, 996, 998, 1000 are visible. The score ends with a double bar line and a final measure.

[illegible]



130

8va...  
 ff  
 f  
 P  
 pp  
 3<sup>a</sup>  
 P  
 pp  
 3<sup>a</sup>  
 pp ritenuto

140

Lo stesso tempo  
 pp  
 senza pedale  
 senza pedale

150

senza pedale

crescendo e accelerando *f*

160

*più mosso* (1:126) *diminuendo*

Meno mosso

*mf* sonoro

*più mosso* *pp*

sempre

170

*p* crescendo

*mf*

sempre

*più mosso* *pp*

pedale

8va.....

190  
Lo stesso tempo (J. 126)

*p*  
*MD*

*c r c s*  
*c a n d o*

190  
*p*  
*MD*

*pp*  
*mp crescendo*

*f*  
*poco a poco*  
*mf rallentando*  
*pp*  
200

*a tempo mp*  
*p*



## THE NEW CHALLENGE<sup>1</sup>

*Ernest Gold*

One of the most perplexing problems the young contemporary composer has to face is what to make of the many systems of composition at present in vogue. Each of these claims to be the only true key to modern composition; all of them are highly complex and stress the intellectual aspects of music to the virtual exclusion of any other consideration. If we wish to understand the nature of the problem besetting the young composer we must, first of all, break up into its component parts the complicated process of musical composition itself.

A composer's conscious activity is directed towards a fusion of two elements that are only partially under his control. On the one side he deals with a definite phenomenon of nature: the tone. This phenomenon 'tone' has, not unlike the atom, a very complex structure in the form of a long series of overtones. These, by virtue of the varying degrees of their relationship to the fundamental, form a miniature hierarchy in which the fundamental is the ruler. Furthermore, when a tone is combined with other tones in either harmony or melody the tones as a group assume relationships that recreate their own individual structures. To put it in another way: Even the most complex symphonic forms and intricate musical textures are but gigantic developments of the basic structure and dynamic characteristics that can be found in a single unadorned tone. No matter to what heights of complexity or subtlety a composer may wish to develop his material he is nevertheless irrevocably committed to the basic acoustical properties of the physical phenomenon: 'tone'.

The other element entering into the writing of a musical composition is the creative life that simmers below the threshold of consciousness in the person of the composer. It, no less than the tone, has a will and logic of its own and yields only partially to the conscious demands of the composer.

In the mind of the public and of not a few musicians it is taken for granted that the composer *creates* music. It would be closer to the point to say that the composer discovers and develops the potentialities inherent in the tone. The development of Western music is a history of the gradual unlocking of those potentialities, comparable with the nuclear scientist's discoveries of the potentialities of the atom. The primary difference between the two is that the composer works less rationally and more intuitively and uses his discoveries for the expression of human experience. Or

<sup>1</sup> This is the first of a series of articles in which young composers will define their attitudes to the chief problems facing them at the present time.

rather the other way round: The inner necessity of expressing human experience drives the composer to use the potentialities of the tone. And if the known potentialities are insufficient he is forced to search out new possibilities and make the tone yield yet more secrets.

This image of the artist as the conscious mediator between his creative urge and the characteristics of the material through which it is expressed can be traced throughout the history of cultural activity.

During the past few years, however, a remarkable phenomenon has made its appearance. There seems to be a growing predilection among composers to minimize the part played by intuition and the human element in the creation of a musical work; and to reduce or eliminate the dynamic properties inherent in the anatomy of the tone. Thus bereft of spontaneity and unwilling to heed the promptings of the tonal material itself, these composers have turned to various more or less arbitrary systems of composition as a solution to their problem. Schoenberg's 12-note technique is, of course, one of the oldest of these. It does away with the laws of tonality despite the fact that tonality is not an arbitrary system but an organic outgrowth of the structure of the tone. More recently other such systems, some involving hexachords, have come into being. In Germany, Boris Blacher is applying mathematical series to the elements of rhythm. Finally the complicated Schillinger System represents an effort to bring about a complete objectification of music by the application of involved mathematical formulations to all aspects of composition.

All this is in tune with the spirit of our age which is so greatly prejudiced in favour of the 'Scientific Approach'. By this I mean the application of a rational and consistent system of thought to any problem. It is assumed that everything can be explained in terms of rational causality. Despite the fact that modern physics have put an end to strict causality, leaving room only for 'statistical probability', the popular belief that a scientific analysis of a problem is necessarily also an exhaustive analysis persists stubbornly. To most of us Scientific Fact and Absolute Truth are synonymous.

This is so for good reason. For ages man had been hampered in his quest for knowledge by the fact that his concepts and methods of investigation were influenced by subjective attitudes. When objective scientific investigation proved to be the key that opened the doors to many epoch-making discoveries it was only natural that men, dazzled by the power of rational objectivity, concluded that this key could unlock all doors. Thus the scientific approach was soon considered the only approach. The very reality of anything that did not yield readily was doubted. Much of what had once been a vital part of people's lives was labelled 'unscientific' and banished to the back room where it led a grey existence in the form of superstitions and empty formalities.

Religion became no more than a fossil for many, a petrified relic from another age. For those that still practised it to some extent it became heavily sentimentalized

or had merely—one is tempted to say—‘decorative’ value. The arts, too, shared in the same fate. No longer really compatible with the thinking of the day, they became outcasts and gradually started to lose their immediacy.

It appears therefore as though that sphere of human activity was hardest hit by the rise of the Scientific Age that comes under the general heading of culture.

It is curious how much we can learn about the nature of a thing by scrutinizing the name we have given it. The word *culture* is closely related to ‘cultivate’. Essentially this means consciously to assist the spontaneous growth of a living organism. It designates the exact opposite of synthetic construction. Thus culture can best be defined as the result of the influence of man’s consciousness upon the spontaneous expression of his own nature.

But concepts like ‘spontaneous expression of nature’ are suspect today. Even the word culture makes many of us squirm. Really acceptable is only that which passes scientific scrutiny. Yet human nature is entirely ‘unscientific’, if scientific means predictable.

Since music as a cultural expression partakes of man’s most basic, irrational side, it has gradually lost its original rank until today it has become a product of rational civilization. Thus it has become a good deal less mysterious, less remote, less meaningful—only more complicated.

Compositions that are not born of man’s intellect *and* nature but which are constructed by his intellect alone bear the same relationship to music that robots bear to living organisms. The unpredictability of human nature is a vital ingredient of art. Time and time again we can see how the masters broke their own ‘rules’ when inner necessity had to triumph over an intellectually determined limitation. This flexibility is impossible with any of the ‘systems’ regardless of how ingenious they might be. For a system once abandoned ceases to be a system.

Whenever there appears an unbalanced form of thinking it calls forth a compensatory opposite. The extremely rational approach of the various adherents to systems is mirrored by a smaller but vigorous group of composers who intentionally leave many elements of their music to chance. Works have been written in which several unrelated groups play simultaneously without any controlled points of coincidence, music where the notes are left to the performer with just a basic outline given, pieces the pages of which may be arranged in any order or even be played backwards or upside down.

It seems as though the ‘system’ and ‘chance’ schools represent an exteriorization of two components that should be in fruitful relationship within the person of the composer. For the creative artist effects an interpenetration of the systematic and the apparently chaotic. Thus he brings into being something that is more than mere blind nature and more than mere abstract construction. Nature has been made



articulate and the concepts of the intellect have become living substance. Partaking of both sides the work of art is thus made in the image of man.

Despite the lip service paid to the intangibles of artistic expression, many young composers would rather doubt the validity of their own creative impulse than put something on paper for which they have no logical explanation. Conversely, they believe that to 'explain' music logically is to prove its validity as a work of art.

In defence of their approach to composition, both above-mentioned groups cite examples from musical history. They point out that most great composers were at first bitterly attacked and yet eventually the musical public recognized the validity of their works. The thought expressed most frequently is that at first even Mozart, Beethoven and Wagner—to mention just a few at random—were considered the epitome of inartistic outrage because, like all true innovators, they broke with the concepts and practices of the past.

Closer examination reveals, however, that this is not quite so. The past was once a living present and the real artist dedicated to the living aspect of his art has usually little quarrel with the living art of another age. What he does quarrel and ultimately break with is the prejudice of his own day.

Until the turn of the century, that prejudice expressed itself primarily in terms of a stubborn conservatism that believed in the existence of absolute standards of beauty. All new works that differed from those rigid concepts were considered inartistic to the extent of the difference. But the 20th century has had to learn that the search for the absolute is folly. It is no accident that Einstein formulated his theories of relativity in our time. Reluctantly we let go of the old concepts.

'The Old Prejudice Is Dead—Long Live The New Prejudice!!' Namely, that only the rational and scientific is true.

Unconscious of the change in the psychological climate, many composers continue to bark up the old tree. Their eyes glued to the past—although they vehemently deny this—they continue to fight on a battlefield which the opponent has long since deserted. They are still fighting yesteryear's prejudice against the new. It is saddening to see them fall headlong into the trap of the new adversary; namely, the 'Scientific Approach'. Tone rows, series of rhythmic patterns, methods of synthetic construction are the order of the day. The creator of music has been turned into the image of the scientist, his studio has become a laboratory, his artistic expression an abstract experiment.

Most young composers start out with the artistic prejudices and blind spots that afflict their time in general. But those with genuine inner vitality break through and free themselves, their art and ultimately their contemporaries.

It took great courage for a man like Beethoven to write the music that he did—regardless of the views held by a tradition-conscious age. Today it takes courage to

write music which includes the human and unpredictable, the 'unscientific' in the deepest sense.

To run against the grain of one's time is a thankless task—but in art it is often absolutely essential. Only when a dynamic balance between the rational and irrational elements in music is re-established, with a true give and take between the composer's nature, his intellect and his material, only then will our music become a living expression of our own age. This is the New Challenge. It is up to us, the young composers of today, to meet it.

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## MESSIAEN—A PROVISIONAL STUDY (III)

*David Drew*

Since the 'new departure', which he made in *La Nativité du Seigneur*, Messiaen's attitude to form has become increasingly disciplined, and at the same time more flexible. This is not to say that *La Nativité* was without its successes. On the contrary: in addition to the two fine pieces already discussed in the second part of this study, mention should be made of *Les Enfants de Dieu*—a remarkably succinct and clearly articulated movement—and *Dieu Parmi Nous*, the most celebrated part of the sequence. The latter's three subjects (representing the Trinity) are exposed in bald juxtaposition, and in consequence the first development takes rather long to get under way, but when at last it succeeds—with the *allegro* treatment of the *lento* idea—the music is forcefully carried towards the second and more powerful development, a massive toccata that is actually the main body of the piece—the rest being merely a preparation, after the manner of Franck's 1st organ *Chorale*. The form proves to be a highly successful solution of the problems inherent in the exposition, and the piece deserves its popularity with recital organists. Yet this popularity is in some measure due to the fact that the music is not without an element of the conventional which, one feels, is a symptom of a slight anxiety on the composer's part in working on such a scale at this stage. The corresponding piece in *Les Corps Glorieux* (1939) is more sure of itself, more completely original. In that respect it is typical of the whole sequence. For the first time, Messiaen turns, when necessary, to a genuinely polyphonic style, which is perfectly integrated within a predominantly harmonic texture; though in some pieces remarkable results are obtained from monodic, or otherwise non-harmonic methods.

The second of the two song cycles of the period, the *Chants de Terre et de Ciel* (1938) shows a similar increase of cogency, when compared with its predecessor, the *Poèmes pour Mi*, (1936). The two song-like slow movements of the *Quatuor pour la fin du Temps* (1941) stand some way to one side of Messiaen's general line of development—possibly owing to the circumstances of the work's composition<sup>1</sup>—yet even though they hark back to the style of the *Theme and Variations*, they too have a new tautness of construction.

All these works, then, seem to be a preparation for the concentrated effort made in *Visions de L'Amen* (1943). Rather than speaking generally of the whole score it might be more profitable to study one particular movement in detail. The second

<sup>1</sup> It was composed while Messiaen was a prisoner of war in Silesia.



movement, *Amen des Etoiles*, is well suited to this purpose because of its ambitious scale and because both the form and the content are to some extent innovatory.

The movement opens with an unaccompanied statement of the theme in octaves:

Ex. 1

*Modéré, solide et décidé (♩ = 63)*

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The melody consists of five periods, the second and fourth being repetitions of the first, and the fifth being a coda which exists partly as a means of drawing together motivic threads (at Y) but chiefly, one suspects, in order to satisfy the composer's inner need for symmetry. Apart from the coda, the melody is—like so many of Messiaen's—of the simplest ternary structure, differing only from a folk song in its higher degree of motivic repetition. The reason for the prevalence of ternary melodies of this kind in Messiaen's music is not hard to find. His tonal thinking being what it is, antecedent and consequent form a self-sufficient tonal block—that is, self-sufficient insofar as it does not project the music forward by creating an imperative need for a continuation. (The fact that period A in the present instance ends on the mediant rather than the tonic does not contradict this; the device is in the nature of an equivocation, an artificial evasion of the inevitable.) Thus a *new* impulse has to be aroused in the second strain, and this has to be followed by a return to the original proposition in order to effect some sense of formal completion. In point of fact, however, we find that the novelty of the impulse of B is as equivocal as the cadence of A—the motivic material is either the same or inverted, and the tendency towards the dominant is extremely cursory. In short, the true impulse of the melody (if such we may call it) comes not from tonal and development factors but from the rigorous application of the *ostinato* principal. The 'obstinate' idea is the melodic movement from the submediant to the tonic via the mediant (X), a process to which everything else is either subordinate (being decoration or varied repetition) or else conducive to greater tension simply because it retards the melodic process (as at Z). As a type this melody may be compared to the first subject of Stravinsky's Symphony in C, which depends upon a similar relationship between temporal length and motivic substance. Neither melody can in any respect be considered as a rhetorical discourse—each extends lines of varying length around a single static motif. The degree of tonal limitation is, however, an important difference between the two melodies. Stravinsky's method makes it just possible—and what a feat of genius it is!—for him to conduct an argument in quasi-sonata form. The unwavering rigidity of Messiaen's harmonic thinking, on the other hand, must always limit him to what Tovey has called 'closed forms'—*lied*, rondo, episodic, or 'overlapping' episodic.

The *Amen des Etoiles* falls into the latter category. The development which follows the exposition is in three stages whose sole compositional affinity is the progressive increase in complexity. This development, at every stage, confirms one's impression of the theme—namely that as far as the composer is concerned the most important factor is motif X. In fact nothing else is touched upon during the course of the Development. A yet more important feature of the theme is that it does not invite harmonic treatment; like many of Messiaen's themes since the second movement of *L'Ascension*, it is conceived as pure monody. So it comes as no surprise that at the start of the development, motif X should be accompanied by a polyharmonic and polyrhythmic complex that bears no close harmonic relationship to it. The effect of this is purely impressionistic, the polyharmonies themselves being dissolved

into a chromatic haze by the unrelieved application of the pedal. At this stage the motif is merely subjected to rhythmic and registrational variation; it is not until the second stage that the notes are altered (by inversion and sequence). Here the rhythmic treatment is traditional, but in the third and most important stage Messiaen turns to his favourite method. The last vestige of traditional development is cast aside, and the *ostinato* implications of the original theme are fulfilled. One melodic *ostinato* on motif X remains static throughout whilst another descends a semitone at each repetition. Across each of these a melody-rhythm founded on R is developed according to methods outlined in the preceding articles of this study. This two-part polyrhythm (the parts are independent but related) is the sole *raison d'être* of the final third of the development. The decorative tracery played in the upper register of the first piano and the filling-in part (founded on a mode 2 added-note chord succession<sup>2</sup>) in the upper register of the second piano are, like the notes of the two *ostinati*, subsidiary to the rhythmic discourse. The discourse is not concluded until the *ostinato* corresponds tonally with the static *ostinato*—at the dominant of the home key: whereat the entire theme of the movement is re-capitulated in the tonic with a complex polyharmonic accompaniment.

The extreme simplicity of this design is wholly typical, and as always, attracts adverse criticism. Such criticism will, understandably, be directed at the most familiar elements; and these are of course either vestigial (the tonal organization) or extreme (the repetition). Having discovered these easily discoverable facts, the unsympathetic critic feels his conscience quieted. He supposes that no further exercise of imagination or intellect is called for—which is comforting but mistaken, for he has scarcely begun to apply himself critically. The obvious fact that beneath the complexity lies a startling simplicity should lead us to the more significant discovery—that through and behind the simplicity a profoundly original sensibility is at work. Although it is difficult to say why, for instance, the whirlwind harmonies at the start of the development create their own logic, it is surely true that the impression they make is neither chaotic nor obvious, but distinctive and purposeful. There may, indeed, be weaknesses; for instance, the motivic working hinted at in periods B and C, and consolidated in the second stage of the development, is far from happy. Messiaen here attempts something that it is not in his nature to do. But even so, the *Amen des Etoiles* is a worthy instance of Messiaen's fearless individuality.

Formally, the *Amen des Etoiles*, like the other pieces in *Visions de L'Amen*, looks forward to the *Turangalila Symphonie*, the last work of Messiaen's which I shall consider in detail here. But before doing so, it is necessary to trace the tendency towards total chromaticism which had first become apparent in *Les Corps Glorieux* (1939) and which culminates in the *Livre d'Orgue* (1953). One might trace back Messiaen's interest in the chromatic scales as such to his use of the limited transposition mode number 7<sup>3</sup>. When he employs this mode—for instance in the last

<sup>2</sup> See page 40 of December 1954 issue of *The Score*.

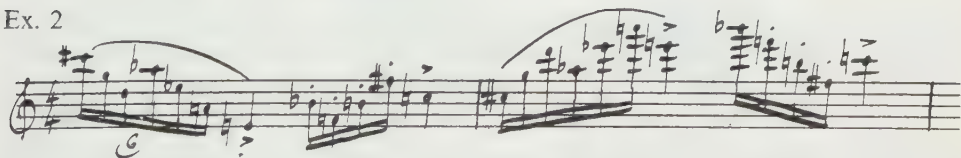
<sup>3</sup> See page 37 *et seq* of the December 1954 issue of *The Score*.



movement of *L'Ascension*—it is evident that each chromatic step is *felt* as an expressive event<sup>4</sup>. But by the time Messiaen had come to write *Les Corps Glorieux*, he was tending to view the chromatic scale as a destructive agent. Such indeed must be one's interpretation of the descending chromatic bass in *Le Mystère de la Sainte Trinité*, the seventh piece in the cycle. Apart from the fact that it is the support for a rhythmic<sup>5</sup> pedal (in a sense the true 'bass' of the piece), it only serves to affirm the tonic D whilst subverting the other harmonic functions. It has no expressive purpose in its own right. For a more specifically structural use of chromaticism, I would refer the reader to *Les Eaux de la Grâce*, also from *Les Corps Glorieux*.

By 1943, the year in which the *Visions de L'Amen* were composed, Messiaen was prepared to go still further in the direction of tonal dissolution. As we have already seen, the third stage of the development of the *Visions des Etoiles* involves the stepwise chromatic transposition of motif X through the interval of a tenth. Whatever function this procedure may have, it clearly has nothing to do with tonal tensions. In the work which followed, the *Trois Petites Liturgies de la Présence Divine* for chorus and orchestra (November 1943 to May 1944), the anti-tonal tendency becomes still more apparent. This is one of Messiaen's most remarkable works, (and by virtue of its unusual simplicity at all levels, it is the ideal successor to *L'Ascension* as an introduction to his style). The *Liturgies* have certain specific affinities (though not of sonority) with Stravinsky's *Les Noces*, not the least being the manner in which melodies and melodic motifs of extreme baldness are surrounded by a halo of foreign chords and counterpoints. Little effort is required to discover that the chromatic scale is playing its part in this, although in a more disguised form than had been the case with the *Visions*. At the start of the third *Liturgie* the piano has the following figure:

Ex. 2



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This is, of course, nothing more than the interval of an augmented fourth reproduced on each chromatic scale degree and disguised by octave transposition. The device is characteristic of Messiaen's later music. (The cadential figure from the first movement of *Turangalila*—*vide* Ex. 8 of my first article—is another instance of it. There are many more.) Before continuing our examination of chromaticism, it

<sup>4</sup> c.f. Bartok's *Bagatelle*, Op. 6, No. 8.

<sup>5</sup> On the rhythm which can be expressed quantitatively as 4/4/4/2/3/2. This is a reversion of the Hindu rhythm *ragavardhana*, which has many potentialities, and appears with great frequency in Messiaen's music.

must be emphasized that the foregoing remarks are not intended to imply that the *Liturgies* have entirely broken away from the influence of functional tonality.<sup>6</sup> This is definitely not the case with regard to the third *Liturgie*, where the refrain, modulating in a cycle of thirds, contributes powerfully to the effect of the astonishingly beautiful 'chorale' which emerges radiantly at figure 6. This passage, which itself modulates freely within the bounds of traditional tonality, is perhaps the finest instance of the ecstatically transcendental in the whole of Messiaen's output.<sup>7</sup>

But to return to the question of chromaticism and the destruction of tonality . . . Certain of the pieces in the piano collection, *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jésus* (1944) continue the process begun in earlier works. One of them in particular, *L'Echange*, deserves examination, both because it uses, in a very elementary form, a technique that animates a great deal of Messiaen's later music, and because artistically it is involved in the kind of disaster<sup>8</sup> which looms in the background whenever the composer attempts what I have called the tightrope-walk from the simple to the sublime.

The entire material of *L'Echange* is contained in the first two bars:

Ex. 3

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The rhythmic shape and the cellular arrangement of these two bars is reproduced throughout. Cellules 1 and 8 also remain unchanged. The variants are as follows:

<sup>6</sup> An unlikeable term suggesting that atonality is necessarily unfunctional. But it has an accepted definition and must, I suppose, be tolerated.

<sup>7</sup> One could say that its emotional content is scarcely germane to our dreary twentieth-century sensibility, but for that very reason it makes an ideal testing ground for critical response. The critic who accepts, say, the final adagios of Honegger's *Symphonie Liturgique*, or of the same composer's *Jeanne d'Arc au Bûcher* because they are, in a sense, ready-made and therefore undemanding, will squirm at what he calls the 'sentiment' of this Messiaen example without observing that it is, musically speaking, original to the very core.

<sup>8</sup> It is unfortunate that for reasons of space this must be the only piece to be considered here out of a collection which contains some of the best things that Messiaen has given us. I have selected it because it is so well suited to my argument, and not because it is representative of the collection as a whole.

cellules 2, 4, 6 and 9 rise a semitone and cellules 3, 5 and 7 descend a semitone, at each repetition. At the twenty-fourth bar each cellule has passed through the twelve notes of the chromatic scale. The process thereupon stops and there is a brief coda.

The naïvety of this almost defies comment. Musically the piece is not so much worthless as non-existent; if one refers back to one of the pre-war works which showed some genuinely creative attitude towards chromaticism—say *Les Eaux de la Grâce*—it is evident that something very serious had happened to Messiaen's capacity for self-criticism at that time.

One's impression of *L'Echange* takes on a new colour when one reads what Messiaen has written of the piece in his introduction to the *Vingt Regards*. Here is his description: 'Descente en gerbe, montée en spirale; terrible commerce humano-divin; Dieu se fait homme pour nous rendre dieux . . . Dieu, c'est le trait en tierces alternées: ce qui ne bouge pas, ce qui est tout petit. L'homme, ce sont les autres fragments qui grandissent, grandissent et deviennent énormes, selon un procédé de développement que j'appelle: "agrandissement asymétrique".'

In short, *L'Echange* is the most primitive kind of programme music, differing from Kotzwara's *Battle of Prague* or other diversions of the kind only in the nature of its aspirations and in its lack of any musical meaning. *L'Echange* is not *bad art*, but merely something to which one can apply no artistic criteria whatever. It resembles the improvisation of a child precociously acquainted with Dr. Schweitzer's views on Bachian symbolism. Yet the composer of this lamentable piece is also the composer of *Dieu Parmi Nous*, in which the symbolism is sufficiently assimilated to become active on a purely musical level. It is from contradictions of this kind that Messiaen's disconcerting musical personality is formed.

*L'Echange* is not so much a composition as a pre-compositional plan, and as such it embodies certain principles that are not inapplicable to the serious task of composition. These principles, which underly much of Messiaen's later music, may be gathered under the general heading of 'overlapping variation'. This covers both formal and melodic (intervallic) procedures. Only the latter directly concerns the question of chromaticism which we are now considering, but in the formal aspect cannot be ignored. Briefly it is this: the material upon which a given piece is founded—whether harmonic, melodic, or rhythmic—is stated at the outset, in the form of juxtaposed cellules, each of which then undergoes a process of variation peculiar to itself. These processes must be described as overlapping because they are not completed in one stage: there is constant alternation between the cellules, so that the exposition is continually reproducing itself in varied form. (The order may of course vary also.) It is a method first applied—and how ineffectively!—in an extreme form by Satie in his *Prélude en Tapisserie* and *Les Pantins Dansent*, but which, in general principle, has its roots in the practice of many nineteenth and twentieth century composers working outside the Austro-German symphonic tradition. As a means of



ordering thematic material it has an important part to play in the fifth, seventh, and tenth movements of *Turangalila*, and in the piano piece *Neumes Rythmiques* (1949). But its greatest significance derives from its application to rhythmic structure, which, since the *Quatuor* of 1941, has shown an increasing tendency to usurp the predominance of traditional thematicism. If we bear it in mind that Messiaen has tended to equate intervallic with rhythmic (durational) factors, using the term 'chromaticism' to cover both, the relevance of *L'Echange* and its principle of overlapping variation will more readily be understood. So let us return to the problem of chromaticism by considering *L'Echange* as an interval-structure.

It will be noted that motif B reproduces in miniature, purely as intervals, the thematic pattern of the piece; that is to say, the static 8, like its larger relative, 1, is opposed by two dynamic forces, one ascending and the other descending (7 and 9). Used with imagination in an appropriate context, the resulting conflict has a genuinely propulsive quality. The conflicting lines may be thickened harmonically (as in the second stage of the development of *Visions des Etoiles*, page 13, or in the piano part of the fifth movement of *Turangalila*, fig. 48 *et seq*) or they may proceed in groups of notes (as in the exciting interchanges of trumpets, trombones and tuba at fig. 29, *et seq* of the second movement of *Turangalila*). The two instances from *Turangalila* are thematically derived; the one from *Visions des Etoiles* is more typical in being unthematic. In a purely unthematic and elementary melodic form, the principle of overlapping variation is implicit in the treatment of motif A in *L'Echange*. Apparently a single voice, it is in fact a combination of two overlapping voices which throughout the piece take a symmetrically divergent course (E, F, F sharp, etc., and D sharp, D natural, C sharp, etc.). The process, if viewed homophonically, results in a wedge series of twelve different notes. From a serial point of view this is wholly insignificant—because of its whole-tone implications and its lack of thematic character—but it is ideal material for some permutational device. An interest in permutation is as natural a consequence of Messiaen's desire to destroy traditional thematicism and replace it by rhythmic thematicism as his attitude to chromaticism is a consequence of his desire to overthrow traditional tonality. The recurring couplet of the piano piece *Ile de Feu* 2 (1950) is a strict permutation scheme based on a wedge series. With the actual method of permutation I will not trouble the reader: suffice it to say that each permutation of the twelve notes is combined with its successor (1 and 2, 3 and 4, etc.) and that at the fifth variation—after an ordered mathematical progression—the ninth permutation emerges as the two forms of the whole-tone scale and the tenth as the ascending chromatic scale. The notes 1 to 12 are associated throughout with durations 1 to 12—the unit being the semi-quaver. It should not be impossible to follow the whole process by ear, but in any case it is of the purest academic interest. In the *Offertoire* of the *Messe de La Pentecôte* (1950) Messiaen attempts to make the rhythmic permutations more easily comprehensible by limiting the values for permutation to five and by using a less complex method. Except for the *ostinato* bass (*presque vif*, page 5), the rhythms develop independently from the notes, and the listener who

is insensitive to the rhythmic argument can console himself by attending to harmonic progressions that are very much in Messiaen's earlier manner.<sup>9</sup> There is further simplification in *Le Merle Noire* (1952), page six, where the time-value series has only four factors. (The notes of the upper voice are organized according to the principles of which Ex. 2 is an illustration.)

Any indication in these two works that Messiaen was returning to a more free style has been contradicted by the *Livre d'Orgue* (1953). Apart from the fourth movement, entitled *Chants d'oiseaux*, the work is entirely devoted to rhythmic schemes that are always as complex as, and sometimes more complex than, any in the *Etudes de Rythme*<sup>10</sup> of 1949-50. So far as I can discover, the note-relationships are almost exclusively governed by a wedge series which even affects the bird song. The chromaticism is thus total. Since melodically everything is either in a state of constant permutation or else is disintegrated by hidden part writing the music is quite without traditional thematism. (By 'hidden part writing' I mean a device that first appears in the piano piece *Cantéyodjayâ* (1948), though it could be traced back to the amazing 12-part canon at the major second in the *Cinq Rechants*, 1947. Essentially it is yet another variation of the overlap principle which we have already observed in *L'Echange*. On page 20 of *Cantéyodjayâ*, there are six canonic entries, but the parts cross and re-cross, giving rise to frequent unisons. The effect—which incidentally is very exciting—is that of free counterpoint in approximately three parts. Subsequent use of the device has been more schematic, and accordingly less expressive.)

So long as the music is without traceable thematic argument it will seem to most listeners to be little more than a vague impressionist rhapsody. Despite its fearsome appearance on paper, the *Livre d'Orgue* does not sound particularly dissonant in performance—less so, certainly, than *Turangalila*. (One cannot fail to notice the masterly way in which it is laid out for the instrument—in this respect, the final piece, *Soixante-quatre Durées*, is a *tour de force*.) But how far is the ordinary listener justified in describing the music as formless? He is not, I feel, entitled to do so until he is as well able to distinguish between the duration of two notes as between their pitch, and until he is prepared to listen to the rhythmic scheme in terms of cellular exposition, development, reversion, etc. The issue is not affected by the fact that Messiaen's conception of development in rhythm, as in everything else, is not at all the generally accepted one. Because for him development consists of the re-deployment of patterns already complete in themselves—the reader may recall our previous

<sup>9</sup> It is, however, as measure of Messiaen's relative disinterest in harmony *per se* at this point that he should prelude the *Offertoire* with a harmonic progression taken wholesale from the opening of the second act of *Wozzeck*. This may possibly be a remote dramatic allusion, occasioned by the superscription to the movement, *les choses visibles et invisibles*, but even so, when offered without subsequent development, it seems wholly gratuitous. In any case, the reference has already been anticipated in *Ile de Feu* 2, page 5, bar 5. Messiaen's earlier works also occasionally reveal his admiration for certain contemporary classics, but the influences are always assimilated into his own very personal style.

<sup>10</sup> This is the collective title sometimes given to the four piano pieces *Neumes Rythmiques*, *Ile de Feu* 1 and 2, and *Modes de Valeurs et d'intensités*.

analogy with a sculptural mobile—there is no reason why the resulting relationships should not have their own abstract significance (though whether it is a significance equal to that of a normal organic growth is quite another matter). Whatever their external differences, the *Livre d'Orgue* of 1953 and *L'Echange* of a decade earlier and *Le Banquet Céleste* of a decade earlier than that, are of the same mould and must be judged by identical criteria. By these criteria we may see that the first piece, for instance, in the *Livre d'Orgue*, *Reprises par interversion*, reproduces precisely the inanity of *L'Echange*, just as the final piece, *Soixante-Quatre Durées* recreates freely the visionary beauty of *Le Banquet Céleste*.

Despite certain distinct successes—some of which I have touched upon—Messiaen's late works add less to his stature as an artist than to his interest as an historical figure, though the *Livre d'Orgue* in particular promises well for the future. I therefore wish to conclude this discussion of his music by reference to the last of his works which unquestionably does add to his artistic stature—namely, the *Turangalila-Symphonie* (July 17th, 1946—November 29th, 1948). As the commissioning of the present study was occasioned by the three performances of *Turangalila* given in this country by the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra under Walter Goehr,<sup>11</sup> it might be fitting to consider *Turangalila* in the light of the one relevant musical comment which appeared in subsequent press notices—I mean Mr. Paul Hamburger's references to the work's 'ham-fisted cyclicism'. This is a half-truth that must be viewed in relation to the very remarkable virtues of the music.

I hope I shall be forgiven for allowing a brief account of my own experience of *Turangalila* at this point. After its first (broadcast) performance in France, the French Radio invited a group of composers and critics, including Honegger and Auric, to broadcast their impressions of the work. One of the musicians—I think it was Honegger—spoke most emphatically of 'cette clarté extraordinaire'. The statement mystified me at the time because although parts of the work had indeed seemed clear, only too clear, the remainder appeared to be an almost meaningless jumble. Now, after repeated hearings and close analysis, I find that an extreme clarity—of orchestral texture and of formal procedure at *all* levels—is one of the most remarkable features of *Turangalila*. The cyclic construction of the work is another aspect towards which my feelings have changed with closer acquaintance. So let us consider the music in broad outline.

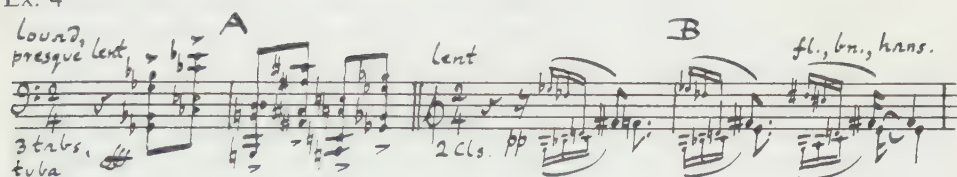
The binary *Introduction* has two distinct purposes. The two chief cyclic themes are stated in the first section. (See Ex. 4 on opposite page).

It is typical of Messiaen's elliptical and often far from ham-fisted thematic working that the relationships between the harmonic thirds in A have already been anticipated melodically in the headlong unison figure with which the work opens—though with two chromatic alterations to allow for a further cross-reference to the *Symphonie's* quartal harmony.

<sup>11</sup> Tribute should be paid to the excellence of these performances. No other performance that I have heard has excelled them—least of all the recent one given at the Vienna Festival.

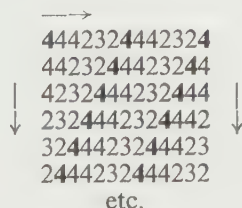


## Ex. 4



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This exposition is self-contained, like the text to a sermon. The cyclic themes are not touched upon during the course of the second and main section, but are set aside for subsequent development in overlapping stages. Thus far the music has derived greater benefit from the remarkable quality of sound than from a simple juxtapository form whose crudity is its most original feature. In the second section, however, Messiaen follows no precedent but his own, and is fully rewarded. The general character and the specific procedure suggest the joyful tumult of a complex carillon. The 'chimes' intermingle according to five distinct schemes (for woodwind, strings, brass and 'gamelan'—consisting of celeste, glockenspiel, vibraphone and piano—snare drum, and cymbal respectively). Schemes one and two (each being duple *ostinati* of rhythm and harmony) work rotationally against each other, as do four (a varied non-retrogradable rhythm) and five (a chromatic time-value sequence). Scheme three, the most complex, occupies a central position. It is not possible to demonstrate here the massive simplicity with which the various proportions are worked out, but it is worthwhile observing one feature of the scheme taken by the strings. A carillon of thirteen chords proceeds according to a rhythmic pattern of twelve factors (the latter being a duplication of the retrograde version of *ragavardhana*). This ensures that the rhythm is advanced by one factor at each repetition of the carillon, so that at the sixth repetition each chord has announced the *ragavardhana* rhythm once, if the process is viewed according to the overlap principle. The rhythm is, then, constantly being reproduced in two different dimensions of time. A diagram may make this more clear. The figures represent the duration in semiquaver units, and are arranged in thirteen vertical columns corresponding to the fixed notes to which they apply.



Simple though they be, devices of this kind, when realized imaginatively, give support to Messiaen's contention that he has 'tried to give music a new Time and a new Space'.

The rhythmic lines that so uninterestingly advance and retract their time-values according to an arithmetical progression in many of Messiaen's late works (*vide* the chinese cymbal part in the passage at present under discussion) might seem to contradict the music's right to the epithet 'imaginative'. But I do not think they do. These chromatic rhythms have a clear function. Since Messiaen's implicit philosophy precludes the idea of the *passage* of time, the regular pulse, either stated or implied, is inconceivable to him. Yet there are times when complex polyrhythms might gain stability through reference to something constant and regular. So, in the present instance, the chinese cymbal proceeding from seven to seventeen time-units and back again provides a point of reference for the other rhythms, and incidentally re-affirms that for the purposes of this music, time is an *accumulation* of moments in eternity. But the device has no more and no less intrinsic significance than the four-in-the-bar tympani pedal points that liberally adorn respectable modern symphonies.

The second movement is in two sections, with introduction and coda, but there the resemblance with the first movement ends. The first section is a rondo-cum-variation design, in which the episodes are variants of the refrain (which in itself contains references to Cyclic theme B). The use of variation technique is the sole justification for the brevity of the sub-sections, and if it is not perceived—ears must be attuned to rhythmic as well as melodic variants—the music will of course seem disconcertingly fragmentary. The second part of the movement (fig. 29 *et seq*) consists of a development in two stages, the first dealing simultaneously with the opening motif of the refrain and its continuation, whilst the second combines a development of the second phrase of the refrain with a treatment of the theme of the introduction in terms of the rhythm of the first phrase of the refrain. (A similar rhythmic transposition is used with great effect in the rondo-finale of Roussel's Fourth Symphony.) Although the full orchestra is engaged throughout, Messiaen's hyper-sensitive ear ensures that complete clarity is maintained. The originality of the music transcends its basic simplicity.

The third movement, *Turangalila* 1, offers a contrast that is, from a dramatic point of view, perfectly calculated. The poise that we find here between a cool, remote formality, and an inward passion that has in it some strange sense of immensity is one of Messiaen's most distinguished achievements, and has a quality that is perhaps only to be found in oriental drama. The atmosphere of ancient ritual is confirmed at fig. 4 by the procession of polymorphous rhythmic symmetries and asymmetries which gives way to the devotional calm of a duet between flute and oboe, accompanied by the gamelan, percussion, and solo violin and cello. One's immediate response to this duet is not radically altered by the discovery that it is in fact a strict retrograde rhythmic canon. We merely recognize, as we do when faced with the identical phenomenon in Machaut's Motet, *Qui plus aime*,<sup>12</sup> that it is something apart from,

<sup>12</sup> Guillaume de Machaut, *Musikalische Werke*, 2nd book, Breitkopf and Härtel, Leipzig, 1929.

yet vitally complementary to, perceptive and sensuous experience. 'It concerns itself'—I quote from Otto Gombosi's article on Machaut's *Messe Notre-Dame* in the April 1950 issue of *The Musical Quarterly*—'It concerns itself with the higher order of metric units and lines by bringing them [asymmetrical elements] into a complex system of symmetries. It transgresses the proper limits and limitations of music as a perceptible order of tones, and acquires an abstract spatial quality. It mirrors a world outlook that is idealistic and transcendental, mystic and heiratic, Gothic and scholastic. It is other-worldly.'

The fourth movement, *Chant d'Amour* 2, is in slow tempo like its predecessor, but the content is totally different in nature and purpose. Where *Turangalila* 1 was remote and formal, it is personal and romantic; accordingly, it is without the rhythmic complexities of the earlier piece, and apart from the recurrence of the *ragavardhana* rhythm, it relies entirely on the expressive content of its melodic and harmonic writing. The movement—which is one of Messiaen's most affecting—is an admirable example of the way in which his inspiration has met the challenge of the large form which he has tackled. Here is an extract from the second trio of this scherzo movement. Miraculously placed in juxtaposition with the *fortissimo* first trio, it is scored for seven solo violins *divisi*, and solo 'cello. The reader of this reduction should further imagine the entire passage accompanied by a *pianissimo* octave trill on E-F played by piano and celesta.

Ex. 5

Très modéré,  
avec amour

p expressif

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At the climax of the *Chant d'Amour* the scherzo and the two trios are superimposed. The interaction of three themes of such different emotional content has a remarkable effect. Although the texture is not in any real sense contrapuntal, the combination is meaningful, for it brings about a striking change in the impression made by the three strands, so that the whole is rather more than the sum of the



parts. (The combination of the students' song and the soldiers' song at the close of the second part of Berlioz's *Damnation of Faust* and the non-contrapuntal superimpositions in Satie's ballet *Mercure*, have an analogous effect.)

*Chant d'Amour* 2 concludes with a re-statement of cyclic theme B followed by cyclic theme A. This signifies the end of the dominion of cyclic theme B—which has left its traces on most of the melodic material of the preceding three movements—and the emergence of the weighty theme in thirds as a governing factor. This re-statement is not so much clumsy as over-indulgent to the listener. The composer is unnecessarily sign-posting thematic relationships which may not be *obvious* at first hearing, but which, with a little effort, should be apparent to the ear. After the poetic subtleties of the *Chant d'Amour*, the cyclic re-statement is sadly out of keeping.

However, the re-statement reminds us of one important fact; that the theme in thirds represents a challenge too categorical to be evaded. Already in the *Symphonie* (at the theme following the dangerously 'challenging' *molto ritardando* on page 126 of the orchestral score) Messiaen has shown that his melodic and harmonic inspiration is capable of withstanding the strain which is put upon it. Now, in the final movement of the first half, *Joie du Sang des Etoiles*, Messiaen answers the challenge of the main cyclic theme with astonishing sureness. Apart from subsidiary episodic references to the second cyclic theme, the movement is entirely founded on the thirds of the theme. After a triple exposition-with-variation, there ensues an extended development whose nervous energy is unprecedented in Messiaen's music. Not since the *Alleluia* of *L'Ascension* has Messiaen been influenced by the dance, and never before have the quantitative rhythms possessed such kinetic force. Everything, from the wonderfully varied orchestration to the close-knit cellular structure (how remote this is from the inertia of *L'Echange*!) contributes to the accumulation of a tension almost too great to bear. The manner in which the tension is resolved is masterly. At the climax, five *fortissimo* chords deflect the impetus of the music, and its entire force is thrown into a cadenza for the piano. Although the piano has nothing but the bare thirds of the cyclic theme in the semiquaver rhythm in which they have been heard throughout, the instrument seems, in some unaccountable way, to have been invested with a force greater than that of the orchestra. It is as if the *fortissimo* chords had brought about some kind of nuclear fission—indeed, in a strictly musical sense they have. The rhythmic nuclei are disintegrated and there is nothing left but for the music to return to its most elemental state—the cyclic theme. Its re-statement, in a new harmonic guise, after the piano's wild cadenza, is the natural conclusion to the movement. Formally speaking, Messiaen has done nothing more successful than this.

The tumult of the *Joie du Sang des Etoiles* demands further symphonic comment, and the second half of *Turangalila* answers this need. The sixth movement, the *Jardin du sommeil d'amour* is dramatically a *consequence* of the two previous slow movements, although it is in no way like them. It is the last, and perhaps the finest, of that series of very slow movements in block harmony which Messiaen had begun

in *Les Offrandes Oubliées* of 1930. Of fairly straightforward strophic construction, the piece is especially notable for the miraculous ornamentation which the flute, clarinet, and gamelan add to the block harmony of the *divisi* strings. The way in which the atonal quasi-birdsong figurations of the piano impinge upon, and constantly change the emphasis of, the F sharp major harmony is worth a study in itself. So too the hypnotic effect of the contrary motion in chromatic rhythm of the percussion starting at fig. 4, and the rhythmic counterpoint of the celeste at the same point. The celeste has a two-part invention by augmentation of two rhythmic cellules. The lower system of the celeste part involves alternating retrograde and rectus versions of the cellule, and, in the retrograde variants, sounds are substituted for rests and *vice-versa*. This is not a usual procedure with Messiaen, but it appears in much more complicated form in the works of some of the younger composers of today—for instance in the *Polyphonie X* of Boulez and the *Trois Chants Sacrés* of Henri Pousseur.

The *Jardin du sommeil d'amour* is followed by two movements which seem to me to show a very marked decline in invention. The seventh movement, *Turangalila 2*, is not fully realized. A *Klangfarbenmelodie* for woodwind and violins, reversed and then repeated, a rhythmic pattern with internal reversions for percussion, an instrumental interlude filled out by a rhythmic canon on the *ragavardhana* rhythm played by the piano, and a quite gratuitous—so far as I can discover—reference to cyclic theme A—all these lack the breath of imaginative life which might have made the movement a worthy successor to the *Jardin du sommeil*. Nor is there much to be said in favour of the tedious repetitive pattern of the first part of the eighth movement, *Développement de L'Amour*. However, in the latter part of this movement, Messiaen recovers himself, and the new treatment of a strain from the *Jardin du sommeil* is one of the most masterly things in the work. I would particularly draw the reader's attention to the remarkable beauty of the harmony at the conclusion of the passage (fig. 45). Like the harmony at the conclusion of Stravinsky's *Serenade*, it combines lyrical warmth with a gentle, purifying astringency. I can think of no more fitting comment than the words with which the American composer Charles Ives concludes his essay on Emerson.<sup>13</sup> 'Within this poised strength we are conscious of "the original authentic fire"—we are conscious of something that is not dispassionate, something that is at times almost turbulent—a kind of furious calm lying deeply in the conviction of the eventual triumph of the soul and its union with God!'

The ninth movement, *Turangalila 3*, returns to the world of *Turangalila 1* (and to the region of the second cyclic theme). If anything, the sounds are more glacial—for the greater part of the movement, the *divisi* strings double the rhythm of the five percussion instruments with chords sounding within their resonances. The music—like that of the *Jardin du Sommeil*—is monothematic. There is no conclusion, in the rhetorical sense: the music merely becomes locked in an *ostinato* and is then cut short.

<sup>13</sup> In *Essays before a Sonata*, Knickerbocker Press, New York, 1920.

The final movement is at once the corollary and the solution of the proposition made by the *Joie du sang des Etoiles*. It shares with it a dance-like melodic character (reflected also in the working with quantitative rhythms), a time signature of 3/16, and—most significantly—the derivation of the main idea from cyclic theme A. But since its function is to offer a conclusion, rather than a repetition of effect, the movement takes a course quite different from that of its 'parent'. In the first place, the main idea is contrasted with a second theme which is in fact a rhythmic diminution of the theme of the *Jardin du sommeil d'amour*. (The metamorphosis is superbly judged.) Secondly, the development, though eventful and exciting, never reaches the eruptive complexity of the earlier movement. The rhythmic elements rely more on traditional syncopations and foreshortenings than on complex quantitative relationships. All this befits a movement that has the character of a consummation. The idea of completion is consolidated by the treatment of the main cyclic theme. To have re-stated it once more would have been like adding a semi-colon to a full stop, and in any case it would have destroyed the dance-character of the music. So instead, the composer allows one chord—the third of the theme's six chords—to stand for the whole theme. It is introduced at a climactic point (fig. 10), and so characteristic is its resonance and so perfect the timing and spacing that there can be no doubt that the reference has been made. Without a suggestion of tautology it is brought home to us that the cyclic process of the symphony has come full circle.

The guardians of conventional good taste and the arbiters of fashion will find much in *Turangalila* to take exception to. But I cannot see that anyone who thinks in terms of more permanent values can deny that the work—like everything of Messiaen's—creates a mode of feeling and imagination that is both original and consistent, however much one may subjectively dislike it. Those of us who feel that it is in some measure the achievement of genius can point to that organic variety of imagination and that originality of execution which are the first prerequisites of genius. I do not think that this is radically affected by the obvious fact that we are dealing with an artist who suffers from severe limitations. But we should be careful that we do not add to his deficiencies others that are in fact of our own imagination. For instance, it would be futile to condemn *Turangalila* by the criteria relevant to the symphonic works of the Viennese classics and Brahms. Even those who are not so foolish might be rushed into hasty judgments—of the kind beloved of opponents of twelve note music—by the existence in Messiaen's later music of a high proportion of what they take to be mathematics. I have tried to meet this criticism, during the course of my consideration of the music. Sometimes it is necessary to concede to it. But by way of conclusion to a subject that must be central to one's whole approach to Messiaen, I should like to quote a passage from Henri Focillon's *The life of form in the arts*, which Sir Herbert Read has already quoted in his *Philosophy of Modern Art* (Faber and Faber, London, 1952, pp. 221-222).

'What could be more removed from life, from its ease and flexibility, than the geometric combinations of Moslem ornament? These combinations are produced



by mathematical reasoning. They are based upon cold calculation; they are reducible to patterns of the utmost aridity. But deep within them, a sort of fever seems to goad on and multiply the shapes; some mysterious genius of complication interlocks, enfolds, disorganizes, and reorganizes the entire labyrinth. Their very immobility sparkles with metamorphoses. Whether they be read as voids or solids, as vertical axes or as diagonals, each one of them both withholds the secret and exposes the reality of an immense number of possibilities. An analogous phenomenon occurs in Romanesque sculpture. Here abstract form is both stem and support for a strange and chimerical image of animal and human life . . . Form duplicates, coils back upon, devours, its own shape. Without once trespassing its limits or falsifying its principles, this protean monster rouses up and uncoils its demented existence—an existence that is merely the turmoil and the undulation of a single, simple form.'

Schoenberg has said: 'form in music aims primarily at comprehensibility'. What impresses one about even the most complex passages in *Turangalila* is the care which the composer has taken to ensure that the formal processes are clear. For instance, in the development of the *Joie du Sang des Etoiles*, a *Klangfarbenmelodie* for percussion exists solely to underline the cellular construction. I can find no instance in *Turangalila* of that wilful obscurity which sometimes characterizes the work of Messiaen's younger followers. A form which fails to make itself clear may well be suspected of being inspired by mathematics.

#### MESSIAEN — A SUGGESTED PLACING

Those who like to affix labels to creative artists, and to do so by viewing them in relation to philosophical, political, or socio-aesthetic trends, will have little difficulty in the case of Messiaen. Here—it seems unmistakable—is an exponent of Henri Bergson's oh-so-dated view of art. Bergson, we remember, wrote<sup>14</sup> 'that the object of art is to put to sleep the active or rather resistant powers of our personality, and thus to bring us into a state of perfect responsiveness, in which we . . . sympathise with the feeling that is expressed. In the processes of art we shall find, in a weakened form, a refined and in some measure spiritualized version of the processes commonly used to induce the state of hypnosis. Thus, in music, the rhythm and measure suspend the normal flow of our sensations and ideas by causing our attention to swing to and fro between fixed points . . .' This is, to be sure, a not altogether unfair account of what would appear to be the aesthetic tenets of Messiaen's art. But it cannot be said to imply, nor can it be allowed to stand for, a direct value judgment, though it has moral connotations. And it brings us no nearer to seeing Messiaen in relation to the creative activity of his own or earlier times. One might try to side-step the issue by declaring him to be an isolated figure. I have tried to counteract this temptation by cross-reference to those of his predecessors who provide points of contact. Yet in one vital respect the method has failed; for not one of the composers I have cited—I shall refer to them again in conclusion—casts any

<sup>14</sup> In *Time and Free Will*, pp. 14-15 (George Allen & Co. Ltd., London, 1912).

light upon Messiaen's essential creative self, the mysterious arches of his imagination and the hidden streams of his musical impulses. In these things Messiaen stands apart from every other musician of his time and of the past. But there is surely nothing in the world of creative art that is wholly unique. So one need not distrust one's sense of a profound affinity between the composer of *L'Ascension*, the *Cinq Rechants*, *Turangalila*, the *Livre d'Orgue*, and the author of the following passage:

'Away from time, always outside of time! Between east and west, between dawn and sunset, the church lay like a seed in silence, dark before germination, silenced after death. Containing birth and death, potential with all the noise and transition of life, the cathedral remained hushed, a great, involved seed, whereof the flower would be radiant life inconceivable, but whose beginning and whose end were the circle of silence. Spanned round with the rainbow, the jewelled gloom folded music upon silence, light upon darkness, fecundity upon death, as a seed folds leaf upon leaf and silence upon the root and the flower, hushing up the secret of all between its parts, the death out of which it fell, the life into which it has dropped, the immortality it involves, and the death it will embrace again. Here, in the church, "before" and "after" were folded together, all was contained in oneness.' D. H. Lawrence, *The Rainbow*, ch. VII.

The modes of feeling and imagination that inform the whole of that wonderful chapter in *The Rainbow* are precisely those of Messiaen at his best—and I do not except an element of something which is, in the very widest sense, erotic.

The deeply intuitive awareness of the concrete thing—whether it is a church or a bird or a dance or simply a musical proportion—and the understanding of its connexion with an idea much larger and more compelling seems to me to be characteristic of both Messiaen and Lawrence. The nature of their spiritual affinity is such that it would be very strange if their modes of expression were not also parallel at certain points. The parallel does indeed exist. Take for instance the famous passage in *The Rainbow* (chapter IV) which describes Will and Anna Brangwen as they move the sheaves in the corn-field, working up and down the field in opposite directions, meeting only to draw apart again. The whole passage relies on a kind of *ostinato* technique which magnificently culminates in the following: 'There was only the moving to and fro in the moonlight, engrossed, the swinging in the silence, that was marked only by the splash of sheaves, and silence, and a splash of sheaves. And ever the splash of sheaves broke swifter, beating up to hers, and ever the splash of her sheaves recurred monotonously, unchanging, and ever the splash of his sheaves beat nearer. Till at last, they met at the shock, facing each other, sheaves in hand . . .'

There should be no need to stress the relationship of the whole passage, with its interlocking processes, its strictly functional repetition, and its sense of hidden ritual, to the technique commonly used by Messiaen. Just as, in Messiaen's music, the almost somnambulistic balance of the technique occasionally gives way, allowing everything to slide into tautology, so does Lawrence elsewhere permit himself an occasional careless and disturbing repetition.

The somewhat problematical forms adopted by both Messiaen and Lawrence are the direct result of the same condition of mind that Ives noted in Emerson: 'the underlying plan of work seems based on the large unity of a series of particular aspects of a subject, rather than on the continuity of its expression.' The complete absorption in 'the larger unity' has its dangers. It accounts for certain instances of un-integrated symbolism in the work of Lawrence, just as it accounts for the kind of calamity we have noted in *L'Echange* (where the composer is so wrapped in what the symbols represent that he isn't aware that the symbols themselves have no life). Furthermore, if the creative mind is constantly working on an idealistic or mystical level, there can be little opportunity for that ironic detachment which may on occasion be required as a corrective. I do not suggest that Lawrence is incapable of such detachment; but had it come more easily to him, he would not, for instance, have made so tiresome and embarrassing a thing of the second half of *The Plumed Serpent*. And, by the same token, Messiaen would not have written the greater part of the song-cycle *Harawi* (1948), whose quality is altogether too reminiscent of the hymns to the Mexican deities in the second half of *The Plumed Serpent*. (Messiaen sets his own poems.)

One might dwell on several other suggestive similarities between the two artists—for instance their common susceptibility to number-mysticism and to what Lawrence calls 'The Spirit of place'.<sup>15</sup> But perhaps their most fundamental similarity is—rarest of things in an artist—their luminous and illuminating optimism, their joyful hymning of 'the strength and beauty of innate goodness in man, in Nature and in God . . .' (I quote Ives again.) Whilst the appreciation of these specific affinities of character may help to clarify and define our response to the music, there exists another, broader, affinity which greatly increases the force of the comparison. The work of Messiaen and of Lawrence runs contrary to the mainstream of contemporary culture, and the denigration that is heaped upon it springs from an identical failure of critical balance. The eagerness with which the evident flaws of both artists are seized upon and made the excuse for avoiding any effort of positive understanding is the result not so much of laziness as of fear—fear of an art that profoundly challenges our habits of thought and emotion. The popular estimate of Messiaen (and of Lawrence) is unlikely to change until time itself has helped to alter those habits.

The consideration of a composer outside the immediate terms of his art but still within the general terms of what he is trying to say has its uses, but in the last resort it is to the music that one must return if one is to attempt a more specific evaluation. During the course of this study, I have taken critical bearings from three composers—Debussy, Satie, and Stravinsky. My reasons for choosing these three should be evident, but in any case, the time has now come to state them ex-

<sup>15</sup> It is interesting that the most complex part of the *Livre d'Orgue*, the second *Pièce en Trio*, should bear the heading '1951—devant les glaciers du Rateau, de la Meije et du Tabuchet' whilst another, *Les Mains de L'Abîme*, is headed '1951—Montagnes de Dauphine, vallée de la Romanche'.



plicitly. Debussy stands as the last truly comprehensive figure in the French tradition, and certainly the last of undisputed greatness. It is inconceivable that any subsequent French composer of significance could turn a blind eye to his achievement. Messiaen's career may be viewed as that of a composer sufficiently different in temperament to be unattracted by the line suggested in Debussy's late sonatas, yet not so different that he is unable to work from the premises of the earlier 'impressionist' music. In regard to this *method* of work, Stravinsky stands as the other pole of attraction. By 'Stravinsky' I mean of course the composer of *The Rite of Spring* and *Les Noces*. What makes Stravinsky interesting as a correlative figure is that his own line of development is so very unlike Messiaen's in outward form and inward feeling (although he has retained enough of the idiosyncrasies of his youth to make possible a comparison between, for example, the first subject of the Symphony in C and the main idea of Messiaen's *Visions des Etoiles*.)

Within the bounds of the French tradition, Messiaen has developed certain of Stravinsky's early methods that Stravinsky himself came to discard. Satie's place in the French tradition is curiously important. For what it is worth, I have stated elsewhere my opinion that this miniscule talent has somehow been granted a grain or two of genius. But unlike the genius of Stravinsky or Debussy, it must be qualified by the word 'defective'; that is to say, there are times when it dissolves into thin air, leaving behind something that is not even talented. For this reason, and because of certain technical and spiritual affinities, I have chosen him as the third point from which to take a bearing upon Messiaen's achievement. For the genius which informs that achievement is indeed defective (as it also is with Lawrence). Yet in one important respect the comparison with Satie is ludicrous. Whereas Satie explores his own world of the imagination with the faltering steps of a child, Messiaen reveals at every stage the confidence which derives from a wide musical culture and a highly disciplined technique. (And of how many French composers since Debussy can that be said?)

There is only one other 20th century composer with whom Messiaen might profitably have been compared—the American Charles Ives. Ives, who seems to have anticipated most of the developments in contemporary music, has even anticipated Messiaen.<sup>16</sup> His transcendentalism is relevant, but he belonged to a lack-of-tradition so remote from Messiaen, and his music is marked by flaws of musicality that are so unquestionably absent from Messiaen's, that the comparison would be dangerous.

For technical reasons the nineteenth century offers little to guide us. Berlioz springs to mind—there must surely be many musicians of today who would say of Messiaen what Mendelssohn said of Berlioz,<sup>17</sup> and many others who would find in Messiaen a new target for Tovey's<sup>18</sup> verdict on the composer of *Les Troyens*. But

<sup>16</sup> c.f. p. 8 of the *Concord Sonata*, and many passages in his orchestral works which use polyharmonies, and complex rhythmic imitation, in the Messiaen manner.

<sup>17</sup> 'A caricature without a shadow of talent.'

<sup>18</sup> 'His capacity for attending to anything but the most immediate melodic, orchestral and rhetorical impulses is nil!'

these things merely tell us that both Berlioz and Messiaen are disputatious figures. Their only common features are the waywardness of their genius and their startling originality. From a technical point of view Liszt provides a better parallel. The particular manner in which he tends to move, with great virtuosity, from a more or less complex harmonic texture to a blandly simple one (as he does for instance in the piano sonata when leading up to the D major *grandioso* passage) is not unlike Messiaen's *modus operandi*, particularly in the piano music. The method is so typical of each composer, that one would sense a temperamental affinity, even if it were not apparent from such things as the programme of Liszt's symphonic poem, *Prometheus*. But Messiaen's problems, and the equipment with which he seeks to tackle them, are so different from Liszt's that the comparison is only useful in that it suggests a general basis for evaluation. Posterity may come to view Messiaen in relation to the French tradition much as we today view Liszt (and to a less extent, Busoni) in relation to the German. Messiaen's analytical discoveries and creative acts in the field of form, rhythm, and timbre, qualify him for a place amongst music's pioneers—a place that is not affected by the possibility that those who follow him may abuse his discoveries. But there is another and more fundamental reason why this *musicien médiéval et doux*<sup>19</sup> should be considered the most important French composer since Debussy. One has only to look at the quartets and symphonies of Milhaud, the instrumental music of Poulenc and the pretty bubbles of Jean Françaix to discover what the reason is. Whether a work of Messiaen's succeeds or fails, it is evident from the very start that the composer feels, in the depths of his heart and soul, the burning urgency of what he has to say. For that one can forgive much.

<sup>19</sup> He is, I feel, the rightful heir of a title which Debussy conferred on Satie.

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NOTE. The list of Messiaen's works promised in the first part of this study no longer seems necessary, in view of the fact that a complete and accurate list has since appeared in the new edition of Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, edited by Eric Blom (Macmillan, London, 1954).

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### *Concerts in the Music Room*

On November 15th, too late for any comment here, the Juilliard Quartet played Schoenberg No. 3, Webern's Five Movements for String Quartet, and Bartok No. 6.

On December 8th there will be a piano recital by Gabriel Tacchino, who won this year's Geneva International Competition.

### *Monthly Talks*

The next of these talks—*Is music an international language?*—will be by Jack Bornoff, on December 13th.

The following is a summary of the talk given on November 8th by Robert Donington, on the interpretation of 18th century music:

'My starting point is that the essentials of musical interpretation are the same for any period. Our artistic experiences come from levels of the human psyche at which there is not much change down the generations, and that is why we can share in the music of Bach or Couperin or Purcell or Monteverdi across the intervening periods.

But besides these essential elements, there are others that are more transient; and here our innate musicianship will not altogether help us. We must remember that musical notation at its best is a very incomplete record of the music. Tempo, for example, cannot be tied down simply by metronome markings, because it depends on so many variable factors. The fluctuations of the rhythm are still less capable of notation. The finer points of phrasing and articulation cannot be shown. The same

is true of dynamic contrasts and of accentuation. A great deal which contributes to the expression can be written down, but only within quite crude limits. The transient elements in the interpretation are not going to be preserved for us by the notation without the assistance of tradition.

A forcible example of this was a recent performance of Mahler's *Song of the Earth* by a reputable conductor and a good London orchestra, in which everything seemed to go badly with the interpretation. The counter-themes were allowed to bury the more important melodies. The tempos were unsatisfactory. Above all, the truly Viennese lilt was missing, and so was that almost hyper-sensitive intensity we associate with Mahler as performed, for example, by his own pupil and disciple, Bruno Walter.

But if that can happen with a recent composer who left a strong personal tradition behind him as well as marking into his notated score probably as much as any performer could take in, then what are we to expect with Bach or Couperin or Purcell or Monteverdi?

What we get, at any rate, is a great majority of performances that are heavy-handed in the same sense in which that Mahler performance was heavy-handed. They are heavy-handed not because plenty of excellent musicianship is not going into the performance—it is—but because there are too many intimate, transient points of style involved for which musicianship by itself cannot find the answers.

It is not the historical incongruity in these unconsciously modernized performances that worries me; it is the artistic incongruity. The music sounds at odds with its interpretation. That is the real point at issue, whether the composer is Mahler or Bach.

However, in addition to the obvious facts that all musical notation is incomplete, that Bach has been dead longer than Mahler, and that his music has passed through a stage of neglect which Mahler's has not suffered, there is a further difference, and this lies between our own attitude towards the inevitable incompleteness of notation, and the attitude of the early composers. It is really only a difference of degree; but it has very considerable importance.

In effect, we like to trust as little of the responsibility as possible to the performer; they liked to trust as much as possible. One clear case is their reliance on more or less improvised ornamentation to supply so much of what later composers treat as written figuration. Even as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century, Rees's *Cyclopaedia* included an article by Dr. Burney which defined 'Adagio in a song or solo' as 'little more than an outline left to the performer's abilities to colour. If not highly embellished it soon excites languor and disgust in the hearers.'

A still wider trust in the performer's abilities was shown by the system of leaving him to realize the accompaniment, again more or less impromptu, from the figured bass.

Both these methods saved the composer's time; but they were also valued for their spontaneity. The performer could not be misled by the apparent exactness of written notation into playing too rigidly.

It was the same with questions of rhythm. Our dotted note, for example, has an official length of half as long again. Unofficially there is no doubt that we sometimes sharpen this rhythm in performance, but in early notation the dot served quite openly to prolong the note by any required amount; and the amount was decided not by the notation, but frankly by the performer. This does not mean that the early performer exercised his wider responsibilities in a more arbitrary way. On the contrary he was trained in a number of well-understood conventions of interpretation, quite apart from what his ears soaked in. Our ears cannot soak in the original traditions, which disappeared when the music went into temporary neglect. But we can discover far more about them than is generally realized from the contemporary text-books on which the early performers were trained.

Even small details may influence the performance substantially. For example, the Baroque cadential trill, as described by literally hundreds of contemporary authorities, starts with its upper note, which is accented and tends to be prolonged. This gives it the same effect on the harmony as any other emphatic *appoggiatura*. If you trill in this way on the leading note of a *written* dominant 5-3 to tonic 5-3 cadence, you *hear* a dominant 4-3 ornamentally resolving through dominant 5-3 to tonic 5-3: which is a decidedly more interesting progression. And this is a trill which, though not generally notated, is implied on almost all Baroque cadences of any weight.

The number of such details which repay attention in the light of the contemporary conventions and instructions is very great; but these are all still a comparatively elementary matter of avoiding what in fact often amounts to wrong notes rather than wrong interpretation. The real challenge lies where the early authorities said least because they took most for granted.

On phrasing and articulation they made a number of valuable statements which at least help us towards an understanding of their methods. On accentuation and dynamic contrast they are perhaps as explicit as could reasonably be expected, though their statements are less numerous in these connexions. On tempo they give rules which the best of them point out that nobody would or could obey. On rhythmic fluctuation they are most informative, but this, too, is not an aspect of interpretation which can be at all closely tied down. On balance and textures they say a certain amount, and on tone-production and tone-colouring rather more; but there is not very much to be learned about tone-colouring from a verbal description.

Important though the cumulative effect of putting the detailed aspects of the interpretation in order may be, it is these larger aspects that really make the difference. Every hint the early authorities let fall concerning them, is useful. I remember, for



example, noticing that in half-a-dozen early descriptions of good string tone one adjective occurred in all of them: the adjective 'clear'. I already knew from experience that an opaque string tone is Public Enemy Number One to early music, especially if it is contrapuntal, when the counterpoint gets covered—and so, incidentally, does the harpsichord. The confirmatory hint was welcome; but the real work lay in finding out that what is needed is roughly speaking to slow down the bow, come towards the bridge, press into the string and avoid *martellato* at the heel.

This is, in fact, a very good example of the half scholarly, half experimental fashion in which I have been feeling my way forward in my own trio-sonata group, the Donington Consort. We have been trying to find the answers in authentic (not in completely literal) 17th and 18th century terms. The difference in overall effect is very marked; and let no-one suppose that this difference consists in bleeding out the passion. 'I have never met with any man'—wrote the translator (J. E. Galliard) in a footnote to Raguene's *Comparison between the French and Italian Music* (1702, transl. 1709)—'that suffered his passions to hurry him away so much whilst he was playing on the violin as the famous Arcangelo Corelli . . . he gives in so much to what he is doing that he doth not look like the same man.' But there are different methods of expressing passion, and opaque tone was not one of them in the 18th century.

Whether the more authentic method seems to you preferable is an individual matter. I prefer it myself, not particularly because it is more authentic, but because I find it gives the music a keener edge. I enjoy it more; and that is perhaps the usual experience once the unfamiliarity has worn off. It is becoming usual nowadays to make some attempt, though an insufficient one, at an authentic rendering. What I want is to see these attempts made far more realistic; first of all by basing them firmly on the very large amount of contemporary evidence that is actually available; and secondly by experimenting with intelligent and persistent musicianship until the result, even if it cannot be proved correct in every aspect, carries full conviction to the hearer—which is undoubtedly the test of success.'

## NEWS AND COMMENTS

### GREAT BRITAIN

#### *Mozart Bi-Centenary*

A remarkable collection of Mozartiana will be exhibited in the King's Library at the British Museum, from January 26th till the end of March. There will be about 260 items, and they will include not only many permanent treasures of the Museum, such as the autographs of several string quartets, of the C minor piano concerto, and of the Anthem 'God is our Refuge'; but also the following autographs belonging to the Zweig Collection: (1) Mozart's thematic catalogue of his own works, which he kept during the last seven years of his life; (2) his marriage contract; (3) four (obscene) letters to his cousin; (4) Das Veilchen; (5) the String Quintet, K.614; (6) the Quintet for harmonica, flute, oboe, viola and 'cello, K.617; (7) Concerto for horn and orchestra, K.447; (8) Aria of Cherubino, Non so più, from Figaro; (9) last movement of string quartet in D minor, K.173; (10) March in C for orchestra, K.408, No. 1; (11) 5 Contredanses, K.609; (12) two Canons, K.559 and K.560; (13) Sonata in F for violin and piano, K.377; (14) Duetto from La Clemenza di Tito, K.621, No. 3.

B.B.C. plans for the early part of the Mozart Year include a performance of all the violin concertos with Menuhin as soloist (Home Service, January 11th-19th), a relay of Idomeneo from Salzburg (Third, January 27th), and two studio performances of La Clemenza di Tito (Third, March 11th and 12th). B.B.C. Television also intend to devote many programmes to Mozart during the course of the year, and one of the first of these will be a visit to the British Museum exhibition in February.

#### *The Boyd Neel Orchestra*

The Boyd Neel Orchestra (Founder and President: Boyd Neel) announces the appointment of Thurston Dart as its Artistic Director. Dr. Boyd Neel is now Dean of the Faculty of Music at Toronto University, and the Orchestra does not at present intend to appoint a permanent conductor; its artistic policy will be guided by a directorate consisting of the Artistic Director, the Leader of the Orchestra (Erich Gruenberg), and the Conductor of any concert or series of concerts.

Thurston Dart, who has been associated with the Orchestra since 1948 as its harpsichordist and continuo-player, sends the following outline of some of the Orchestra's plans for the future.

'No richer repertory exists in all music than the range of works composed for string ensemble; and though this vein has been worked for five hundred years by composers of all five continents, there are still no signs of its becoming exhausted.

The introduction of the incurved Tourte bow in the last decades of the eighteenth century marked a watershed in the development of this great repertory, for it transformed the techniques and sonorities of the stringed instruments themselves, as well as coinciding with the disappearance from the orchestra of the traditional continuo instruments. For present-day performers the conclusion seems inescapable. To do justice to a repertory divided into two parts in such a clear way, two broadly distinct approaches to its performance are needed: one for the music of the period from 1450 to 1780 or so, and the other for later music—not one orchestra, in fact, but two. For early music, the problem is a triple one: how to ensure the right notes, the right style, and the right sound. Right notes: four out of five current editions of old music reproduce not what the composer wrote but what the editor thinks he ought to have written. Whenever possible the Boyd Neel Orchestra will therefore use its own special editions, newly revised from the original sources. Right style: four out of five current performances of old music take no account of the many different traditions of tempo, phrasing, articulation, and dynamics that the composers had in mind. Right sound: the Orchestra will base its interpretations upon the special sonorities, balance between instruments, and orchestral layout that characterized the varied performances of earlier centuries. To ensure the utmost authenticity of style the Orchestra has had a complete set of "Corelli" bows made to its own specification, modelled on the best surviving specimens of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was for bows of this kind that the acknowledged masterpieces of this period were composed; but these bows were not semi-circular in shape, nor

was the tension of their hair controlled by a clumsy and inelegant trigger mechanism. The Orchestra will also have at its disposal a fine eighteenth-century chamber organ, newly restored, and a modern concert harpsichord. In a series of broadcasts and concerts at the Royal Festival Hall, the Victoria and Albert Museum and elsewhere, beginning next January, the Orchestra will present some aspects of this repertory of early music, reviving the centuries-long tradition of performing in ensemble without a Conductor; the Artistic Director will be at the keyboard. All the main streams of music will be represented in those programmes, notably the great but too neglected heritage of music written by English composers during the last five hundred years; the works that will be heard include newly edited suites, fantasias, symphonies, dances and concertos by Telemann, Geminiani, Handel, Mozart, Purcell, Tomkins, Vivaldi, Dowland, Bach, Byrd, Couperin, Arne, C. P. E. Bach, Tartini and others.

No apology is needed for this elaborate way of treating the earlier part of the repertory for string orchestra. It is hoped that the performances may provide a certain yardstick for authenticity. Few will deny the growing need for one. The Orchestra will also continue to play works by various nineteenth-century composers, and among those who have recently consented to write new works for its programmes are Malcolm Arnold, Gerald Finzi, Roberto Gerhard, Antony Hopkins, Anthony Lewis, Robin Orr and Arnold van Wyk.

#### *Public Concerts*

In addition to the concerts announced in the September issue of this magazine, the I.C.A. Music Section (British Section of the I.S.C.M.) will give two others, one in collaboration with the B.B.C. on January 3rd, the other in collaboration with the Italian Institute, on March 12th. There will now be fifteen programmes altogether, with at least that number of new British works being written especially for them, and a range of contemporary music over the season as a whole such as has not been heard in London concert halls for many years. The general scheme of the concerts is shown on the opposite page.

The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and its conductor, Charles Groves, are to be congratulated on the enterprising programmes of their Thursday Symphony Concerts this season. Among the many interesting works to be performed, one may mention those by Stravinsky (*Le Chant du Rossignol*), Rubbra (6th Symphony), Skalkottas (*Five Greek Dances*), Eugene Goossens (*Pastoral 1940 for Strings*), Fricker (*Symphony No. 1*), and Peragallo (*Piano Concerto*).

#### *Purcell Recordings*

The Deutsche Grammophon Company has invited the Saltire Singers (under Hans Oppenheim) to take part in a recording of many sacred and secular works by Purcell. Meanwhile, Argo have planned to record the whole of Purcell's works, with J. A. Westrup as general editor. The schedule for 1956 is as follows:

- (1) All the keyboard works, played by Thurston Dart,
- (2) The 12 'Sonatas of III Parts',
- (3) Incidental music to *Amphitryon*, Abdelazer, Aureng-Zebe, Bonduca, Circe, Cleomenes, and *Distressed Innocence*.

Argo will also record the complete works of Orlando Gibbons, under the editorship of Boris Ord and Thurston Dart; and the complete works of William Byrd.

#### *Miscellaneous News of Composers*

*Peter Racine Fricker* has been invited to write a harpsichord piece for first performance at next year's Summer School at Dartington Hall. He is also writing a large-scale work for radio, *The Death of Vivien*—a mediaeval French knight who died heroically fighting the Saracens. The libretto is a translation by René Hague of an epic that is contemporary with the Song of Roland, and has only recently been discovered.

*Benjamin Britten* has finished one act of his full-length ballet with John Cranko for Covent Garden. He is also working on a new edition of Blow's *Venus and Adonis* for the English Opera Group; and amongst other plans for the near future is a television opera for N.B.C.

*Roberto Gerhard's* recent works include a set of 'fiendishly difficult' piano pieces, and a string quartet. He has now been asked by the Boyd Neel Orchestra (see above) to write a concerto for harpsichord and strings, with percussion; and the first performance of this work is planned for next June.



I. C. A.  
CONTEMPORARY MUSIC SEASON  
18th November, 1955 to 11th June, 1956

WIGMORE HALL (7-30 p.m.)

November 18

Juilliard Quartet String Quartets by Elliott Carter\* Valen, Op. 13† Bartok, No. 4

December 20

Frederick Grinke Tippett, Sonata for four horns‡  
Michael Mullinar Klebe, Violin Sonata  
Dennis Brain Ensemble Vaughan Williams, Violin Sonata\*  
Schuller, Five pieces for five horns†

January 24

Yvonne Loriod Debussy, 3 Preludes  
3 Etudes  
Boulez, 2nd Piano Sonata†  
Messiaen, Regard des Anges  
Regard du Silence  
Regard des Hauteurs  
Première communion de la Vierge  
L'Esprit de joie

February 28

Saltire Singers Iain Hamilton, Cantata for vocal quartet and piano‡  
Ex-members of National Robert Crawford, Quintet for clarinet and strings‡  
Youth Orchestra Thea Musgrave, Cantata for a Summer's Day, for vocal quartet, string quartet, double bass, flute, clarinet and reciter†

March 27

Noël Lee Copland, Piano Variations  
Alexander Young Britten, On this Island  
Rainier, Six Keyboard Pieces‡  
Lambert, Li-Po Songs  
Ives, Piano Sonata No. 1†

ARTS COUNCIL DRAWING ROOM

December 8 (7.30 p.m.)

Franz Reizenstein 12 Preludes and Fugues‡  
(played by the composer)

January 9 (7.30 p.m.)

New Music Manchester Group P. Maxwell Davies, Trumpet Sonata\*  
A. Goehr, 3 Fantasias for clarinet & piano\*  
E. Lutyens, Valediction Op. 28  
A. Webern, Variations for piano Op. 27  
R. Hall, Sonata for 'cello and piano\*  
E. Seidel, Fantasia for piano\*  
N. Skalkottas, Sonatina & Tender Melody

February 7 (8.30 p.m.)

Gervase de Peyer Alan Rawsthorne, New piece for tenor and percussion‡  
Christopher Bunting Marc Wilkinson, Diptych for solo clarinet ‡  
Duncan Robertson Roberto Gerhard, Scena for contralto and percussion‡  
James Blades Phyllis Tate, Sonata for 'cello and clarinet  
Stephen Whittaker Malcolm Williamson }  
Heather Harper Arnold Cooke } Unaccompanied songs for tenor  
Shula Doniach } ‡  
Christopher Shaw, Sonnet for tenor and clarinet‡  
Karl-Birger Blomdahl, Trio for clarinet, 'cello and percussion†

March 12 (7 30 p.m.)

Luigi Dallapiccola Janacek, Violin Sonata  
Bruno Materassi Dallapiccola, Quattro liriche di Antonio Machado  
Emilie Hooke Berkeley, Sonatina for violin and piano  
Dallapiccola, Goethe Lieder  
Stravinsky, Duo Concertant

B. B. C.

January 3 (7.15 p.m.)

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra Michael Tippett, Fanfare  
Sir Eugene Goossens Luigi Dallapiccola, Cantata for soprano and orchestra: An Mathilde†  
Magda Laszlo Alan Bush, Symphony in C  
Nikos Skalkottas, Andante Sostenuto, for piano, wind and percussion†  
Denis ApIvor, Thamar and Amnon, for soloists, chorus and orchestra‡

ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL

April 21 (3 p.m.)

Olivier Messiaen Wilfrid Mellers }  
Ralph Downes Elisabeth Lutyens } New organ works‡  
Humphrey Searle }  
Arnold Schoenberg, Variations Op. 40  
Olivier Messiaen, Messe de la Pentecôte

April 30

May 14

May 28

June 11

A series of late-night concerts is being planned. These concerts will run for eight weeks, from April 30th to June 18th, with programmes given alternately by the British section of the I.S.C.M. and by the Boyd Neel Orchestra (May 7, 21, June 4, 18). Details will be available in the New Year.

‡ First Performance.

† First Performance in England

\* First Concert Performance in London

I. C. A.

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

SEASON

1955-1956

*Michael Tippett*, whose new sonata for four horns will be heard at Wigmore Hall on December 20th, was invited last month by the town of Brunswick to spend a week there, mix with Brunswickers, give a public lecture, and be present at performances of his *Divertimento* and of his song-cycle, *The Heart's Assurance*. This delightful invitation extends also to 1956 and 1957, by which time Brunswick will have played to Michael Tippett the whole of his chamber music. Meanwhile Tippett's oratorio, *A Child of our Time*, is being recorded by H.M.V., under the auspices of the British Council.

*Bernard Naylor* has written a Mass for chorus, semi-chorus and orchestra.

*Priault Rainier* is at work on a setting of David Gascoyne's 'Requiem', for tenor solo and chorus. It will be sung by Peter Pears and the Purcell Singers, next April.

#### UNITED STATES

The Monday Evening Concerts of Los Angeles, with Igor Stravinsky as honorary chairman, are giving twelve most enterprising programmes during the present season. Dates and items of special interest are as follows:

October 3rd: Monteverdi, Vespers.

October 17th: Gesualdo, 5-part madrigals, with Aldous Huxley speaking on 'The Court of Ferrara and Gesualdo'.

November 28th: Guillaume de Machaut, Messe Notre-Dame; Schoenberg, Six pieces for male chorus, op. 35; Bach, Cantata No. 84.

December 5th: Britten, Canticle No. 3; Priault Rainier, Sonata for viola and piano; Milhaud, Les rêves de Jacob.

January 9th: Elliott Carter, Etudes and Fantasy for Wind Quartet; Vincent Persichetti, Concerto (piano duet); Arthur Berger, Duo for 'cello and piano.

January 23rd: Luigi Nono, Canti per 13; Bach, Cantata No. 209.

February 6th: Giselher Klebe, sonata for violin solo; Camillo Togni, Helian songs.

February 20th: Stockhausen, Kontrapunkte No. 1; Stravinsky, Berceuses du Chat; Dallapiccola, Goethe-Lieder.

March 5th: Mozart, Cantata: Dir, Seele des Weltalls, K.429A; Copland, In the Beginning; Stravinsky, Septet; Bach, Cantata No. 12.

March 19th: Boulez, Le Marteau sans Maître; Mozart, Serenade for 13 wind instruments, K.361.

*Stravinsky's* Canticum Sacrum ad honorem Sancti Marci Nominus will be first performed in September 1956. It is dedicated 'to the city of Venice, in praise of its patron Saint, the blessed Marcus Apostle'. The orchestra consists of two tenor trombones, bass trombone, contra-bass trombone, 3 trumpets, bass trumpet, organ with 32-ft. stop, harp, two bassoons and contra-bassoon, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, violas and basses. The choral ensembles are 'monastic'; male choir with boy discanti and alti and only tenor and baritone solo voices. The chorus parts are comparatively restricted in range.

The texts are all from the Vulgate and Stravinsky has selected and arranged them in the form of a cantata in five sections. It is a Sacred Concert and in no sense a liturgical work like the Mass. The 1st, 4th and 5th parts are from the Gospel according to St. Mark. The 2nd part, Surge Aquilo, is from the Song of Songs. The 3rd part enumerates the theological virtues in verses from Deuteronomy (*Charitas*) and the Psalms (*Spes* and *Fides*).

In view of the extraordinary instrumental and vocal ensembles chosen for the Canticum, it is interesting to know (says Robert Craft in *Musik der Zeit*) that Stravinsky 'made an excursion to Venice, where in the straight-up and echoing Frari, and in the round and resounding Salute he heard an instrumental ensemble and a chorus in a motet by Croce da Chioggia. The boom and the residue were what had been expected of course, but the point was to hear them as his illustrious 17th and 16th century colleagues had, to know the concrete problem and not to be left with an abstraction to guess at.'

The Canticum lasts 15-20 minutes. According to present plans, the first English performance will be given in December, 1956, in one of the great London churches; and the programme will also include the Mass and Les Noces.



*Eduard van Beinum* has been appointed the successor to *Toscanini* as permanent conductor of the N.B.C. Orchestra.

#### SWEDEN

The Fylkingen programmes, to be given in association with the Swedish section of the I.S.C.M. in Stockholm this season, deserve to be quoted in full:

September 24th: Complete piano works of Schoenberg, played (with commentary) by Niels Viggo Bentzon.

October 15th: New chamber works by Åke Hedlund, Bo Ullman, Diana Krull, Lennart Hedwall and Hans Ramberg.

November 19th: Webern programme: op. 7, op. 22 and op. 27. Discussion by Karl-Birger Blomdahl, Gunnar Bucht and Bengt Hambraeus.

December 3rd: Sven-Eric Johanson, Sonata for solo flute; Jan Carlstedt, String Trio; Fartein Valen, Piano Sonata No. 2; Karl-Birger Blomdahl, Trio for clarinet, 'cello and piano.

End of January, 1956: Electronic works by Eimert, Goeyvaerts, Hambraeus, Koenig, Pousseur and Stockhausen.

February 25th: Ernst Krenek playing his 20 miniatures for piano, with commentary; Alban Berg, Lyric Suite.

March 24th: Hilding Hallnäs, Song cycle for soprano, flute, clarinet, 'cello and piano; Pierre Boulez, Three structures for two pianos; Elliott Carter, String Quartet.

#### FRANCE

The Association des Concerts de Chambre is giving three programmes in January and February, consisting of all the works Mozart wrote during his visit to Paris in 1778.

*Poulenc's* new opera, *Dialogue des Carmélites*, will have its first performance at Venice in December, 1956.

*Messiaen's* 'Trois petites Liturgies' have been recorded by Ducretet-Thomson.

#### HOLLAND

One of the most remarkable features of Dutch musical life is the Donemus Foundation, in Amsterdam. The following account, taken from a pamphlet issued on the occasion of the Concertgebouw's tour of the United States a year ago, will be of interest to many readers.

'The object of the foundation is to make known, both at home and abroad, works written by Dutch composers since about 1880. It is more difficult to explain how this propaganda is distributed. Firstly, any Dutch composer wishing to become eligible for help from Donemus must submit his work to a jury of composers and performers, who vary from year to year. Once the jury has accepted a composer, he is affiliated for a period of five years in the first instance, and may have this extended in further five-yearly periods.

As long as a composer is affiliated to Donemus, the Donemus library contains copies of all his works, both published and unpublished. This principle may have the disadvantage that a good work by an otherwise mediocre composer who is not affiliated will not appear in the library, and that a bad work by a composer whose general level of composition has merited his becoming affiliated, *will* appear. On the other hand, there is the great advantage that Donemus owns a complete and up-to-date collection of the works of its hundred-odd affiliated composers.

Obviously, the acquisition of music already published presents no problem. These works are simply placed in the library and anyone inquiring after them is referred to the publisher in question. As, however, contemporary Dutch music finds its way to the publisher all too rarely—probably because the limited market does not allow a large enough edition to justify publication—Donemus is confronted with a heavy task in connexion with the unpublished works. And the way in which this problem is solved can best be described by tracing the path of a new composition from the moment the manuscript reaches Donemus.

First of all, the manuscript is microfilmed, page by page, and from this film, a limited number of small-size copies (miniature scores) is made for the library. Various reprographic systems are used to do this, including fotocopy, black line print and a combination of these. When this stage is completed, the existence of the work is made known in sundry publications such as a quarterly periodical, a systematic catalogue, etc. These publications reach soloists, conductors and others likely to be interested, who then know that the work is available for study in the library, or can be obtained for perusal at home. In most cases, the inquiries arrive soon after the existence of the work has been made known; and as soon as a first performance is being contemplated, a team of professional copyists begins to make a complete set of parts which are then reproduced by means of a suitable reprographic system.

Sooner or later, nearly all new works find their way to the radio, and it is then possible to make a tape recording so that visitors to Donemus's library can have the added benefit of listening to a recording while reading the score.

All these processes take place without involving the composers in any expense whatsoever. On the contrary—the composers are entitled to a certain percentage of the income from the hire of their music (in the case of orchestral works), and from the sale (in the case of chamber music), without taking into account the fact that the obviously high expenditure may never be equalled by this income. The inevitable deficit has to be made good by subsidies granted to Donemus by the Dutch Government, by the city of Amsterdam and by a sister foundation called “Nederlandsche Muziekbelangen” (Dutch Musical Interests), which in turn is subsidized by the Dutch Performing Rights Society.

Donemus does not consider itself an end, but a means to an end, as may be seen from the fact that the foundation returns the copyright of any work to a composer the moment he has found a publisher for it. The music publishers do not fear competition from Donemus, but rather regard the foundation as an experimental laboratory providing data concerning the probable risk involved in publishing any contemporary work by a Dutch composer.

The Concertgebouw programmes for the present season include symphonies by Fortner, H. Andriessen (No. 4), and K. A. Hartmann (No. 6); also Caplet's ‘Le Miroir de Jésus’, Schoenberg's violin concerto, Pijper's piano concerto and ‘Fragments from The Tempest’, Rawsthorne's Concerto for string orchestra, and Bertus van Lieer's bassoon concerto.

The Dutch government has commissioned *Henk Badings* to write an opera on the subject of Rembrandt, for the 1956 Holland Festival.

## ITALY

The Italian Third Programme sends the following details of broadcasts planned for the period from October, 1955 to March, 1956. *Operas*: Monteverdi, *Il ritorno di Ulisse*; Meyerbeer, *Les Huguenots*; Cherubini, *Les deux journées*; Pizzetti, *Fedra*; G. F. Malipiero, *I capricci di Callot*; L. Cortese, *Notte veneziana*; Orff, *Antigone*; Boieldieu, *Le Calife de Bagdad*; Stravinsky, *Rossignol*; Petrassi, *Morte dell' aria*; Martinu, *La Comédie sur le pont*; Stradella, *La forza d'amor paterno*; Mozart, *Mitridate*, *Lucio Silla*, and *La finta giardiniera*; Strauss, *Daphne*; Busoni, *Doktor Faust*; Ghedini, *Le Baccanti*.

The symphony concerts include works by Luciano Berio, Messiaen (*Turangalila-Symphonie*), Petrassi, Castro, Dallapiccola and Britten. In addition, as reported in the last issue of this magazine, the whole of Stravinsky's works (except *Le Roi des Etoiles*) will be broadcast in eighteen programmes, with commentaries by Roman Vlad. Other comprehensive series are those on African Music (with commentaries by André Schaeffner), the history and development of bel-canto (A. Della Corte), the string quartet in the 20th century (Riccardo Malipiero), and the history of the violin (Marc Pincherle). These follow on last season's enterprising scheme of twelve programmes devoted to serial music, each introduced by Roman Vlad.

*Dallapiccola* will visit England in March, and will take part in a programme that includes his *Goethe-Lieder* and his *Quattro liriche di Antonio Machado* (see Great Britain). Meanwhile he has sent a short note on his two most recent works: the *Canti di liberazione*, and the *Cantata, An Mathilde*.

‘The *Canti di liberazione*, for choir and large orchestra, form a sequel and counterweight to the *Canti di prigionia*. As in that work, I've taken three Latin texts—from Sebastiano Castellio (the opponent of Calvin), Exodus and St. Augustine. The three settings are *Adagio—Allegro—Adagio*, again as in the *Canti di prigionia*. It is undoubtedly the most difficult work I've written.

An Mathilde: three poems by Heine, written during that last period of his unhappy life when he had much time to think . . . and, after his fashion, to become almost a mystic.'

This second work, for soprano and orchestra, aroused extraordinary enthusiasm when heard at Donaueschingen in October; as already stated, it will be broadcast by the B.B.C. on January 3rd.

#### GERMANY

*Ferenc Fricsay* has been appointed musical director of the Munich State Opera, in succession to Rudolf Kempe.

The Deutsche Grammophon Company has recorded *Blacher's* 2nd piano concerto, with Gerty Herzog as soloist and Hans Rosbaud conducting. Blacher's new ballet, *The Moor of Venice*, had its first performance at the Vienna State Opera on November 29th.

*Heimo Erbse's* 'Impressions for Orchestra', op. 9, will be played by the Berlin Philharmonic on January 18th. Erbse is now working on a Dialogue for piano and orchestra, for performance in Vienna early next year.

*Giselher Klebe* is writing a four-act opera on the subject of Schiller's 'Robbers'.

#### Mozart Bi-Centenary

The Munich State Opera will give *Idomeneo* with the staging used for the first performance in 1781; while Mannheim, one of the towns most closely associated with Mozart, plans in 1956 to put on every one of his operas, in chronological sequence.

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